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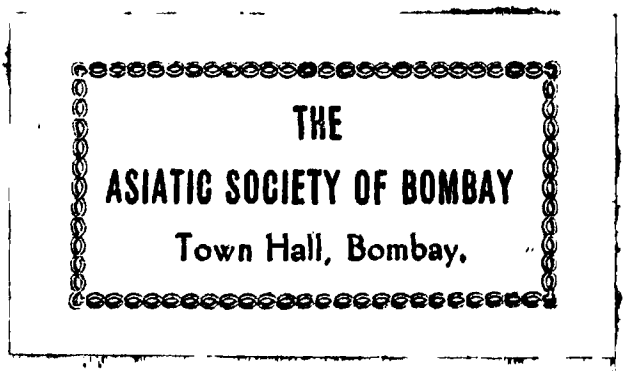

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A HISTORY

OF THE

THIRTY YEARS' PEACE.

A.D. 1815–1846.

B1971

By HARRIET MARTINEAU.

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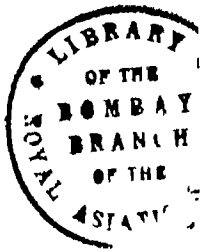

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Some beneficent legislation took place during this period, three instances of which were of such strong popular interest as to require notice in some detail.

Up to this time, the criminal law of the country had not been accessible to those who lived under that law; and it was no easy matter for professional men to attain any competent knowledge of it. The criminal law of England was contained in an immense and confused mass of documents—statutes, ancient and modern records, reported decisions of the judges, and text-books. If the mind of every individual lawyer was required to deduce the law from all these repositories, it was clear that the vast work would not really be done; and if the profession proceeded on tradition, or in conventional agreement with regard to the most commonly occurring cases, it does not appear that the deposited law was of much practical use. It ill befitted a civilised state and an enlightened age that the criminal law should not be clearly ascertained, and laid down in some depository accessible to all. This great work was appointed, in 1833, to a royal commission, whose

business it was to inquire how far it might be expedient to reduce the whole criminal law of the country, written and unwritten, into one digest; and to report on the best manner of doing it. In 1834, the commissioners reported in favour of the object; and they forthwith proceeded with the work. One of the immediate results of the labours of the commissioners was the bill passed in 1836 for allowing the assistance of counsel to prisoners in criminal cases. In 1837, a far more important amelioration was achieved.

For some years past, public opinion had tended more and more towards the abolition of the punishment of death. From the time when Sir Samuel Romilly began his disclosures of the effects of severity of punishment, there had been a growing conviction that severity of punishment tends to the increase of crime. Whatever other objections to the punishment of death might exist—some denying the right to take away human life at all—some denouncing the cruelty of cutting off a man at the moment of his being laden with crime—others pointing to the cases of innocent persons who had been hanged—the broad ground of the impolicy of the penalty lay open to its opponents of every class. It had been found, as often as tried, that the average of particular crimes lessened after the remission of the death-penalty, while the number of convictions increased largely in proportion. Prosecutors and juries would do their duty to society, when that duty no longer required of them what they considered the murder of the individual culprit. Justice became more certain; and with certainty in the administration of justice comes invariably decrease of crime. Those who knew these things had arrived at advocating a total abolition of the punishment of death; and the facts and figures they exhibited certainly appeared to leave no doubt as to the past operation of the principle of leniency, and no reasonable ground for question of its having the same effect in the future. The government and the criminal-law commissioners, who were not prepared for such a change as society at large now seemed to desire, pleaded that there might be a danger of revulsion to a vindictive system, if, by any accident, grave crimes should increase soon after the abolition of the death-penalty—a plea which might as well have

been urged against any remission whatever, and which took for granted the almost impossible supposition that society can go back to a barbarous system, after having achieved emancipation from it. Lord John Russell, especially, fell into his usual apprehension of 'going too fast,' in his usual forgetfulness that it is impossible to go too fast towards any object, unless there is some reason for going slower. It is probable, however, that there were unavowed reasons for going slower. It is probable that those reasons lay in the difficulty of knowing what to do with the criminals now cleared off by the halter. Our system of secondary punishments is so imperfect—our methods are so desultory and vacillating, and our failures have been of such serious import, that any government might feel perplexed about the disposal of a new and more desperate class of felons which would be brought under its care by the abolition of the punishment of death. If they had ventured to state this as their difficulty, instead of bringing forward pleas which everybody saw to be untenable, the enemies of death-punishment would have perceived at once that the direct way to their object was by taking in hand the subject of secondary punishments. But such an avowal—that men must be hanged because we did not know what else to do with them—could not be made by any government, either in decency, or because no man could be hanged after such an avowal. So the commissioners and the government contented themselves with giving reasons which nobody believed in for limiting instead of abolishing the punishment of death. It is possible that they might have remitted more, or the whole, if they had been as well aware as every government ought to be of the state of public opinion and feeling on a matter of which every man and every woman was capable of judging.

There can be no doubt that the courage and enterprise of the ministers and the commissioners were much stimulated by the exertions of Mr. Ewart in parliament, and of many sensible men and able lawyers elsewhere, to concentrate the prevalent feeling and opinion against death-punishment altogether; or in all cases but murder. In 1837, the commissioners recommended the remission of the death-penalty in twenty-one out of thirty-one cases in

which the liability had hitherto existed. They thought this extremely bold—feared they were going faster and further than government would approve—and did not know what Lord John Russell would think of so sweeping a change. Lord John Russell thought it bold, but enjoyed the prospect of throwing so great a boon into the lap of the nation and its representatives. On the morning of the day of debate, one of the commissioners went to prepare Lord John Russell for the occasion, by putting him in possession of the knowledge and the proposals of the commissioners. A friend begged him to tell the minister that some people thought the House and the nation more ready than he was aware of for the abolition of the death-penalty, and that he must not be surprised if he found it so. From the minister's surprise at the result of that night's debate, it was clear that he had had no warning.

On the 23rd of March, Lord John Russell had asked leave to bring in a bill—the first of the series which was to reduce the number of capital offences. On the 19th of May, the order of the day for the necessary committee was read. The ministerial proposition was to remit the death-penalty in 21 cases; and to restrict it considerably in some of the 10 which remained. Mr. Ewart moved an amendment, confining the penalty of death to the one case of deliberate murder—scarcely disguising, in Lord John Russell's opinion, his object of obtaining an abolition of the punishment as soon after as possible. The minister declared himself extremely surprised at the turn the debate had taken before the division. Instead of rejoicing in the great boon which he was offering, and which he had supposed might be thought too daring, the House treated him as if he had been proposing to make the law more instead of less stringent. The ministerial adherents took the alarm; and it was understood that the Whig whipper-in strained every nerve to rally members for a division which they had concluded to be perfectly safe without them. The result of these exertions was a ministerial majority of one. The bills passed the Lords on the 14th of July, Lord Brougham observing that nothing but the pressure of time prevented his endeavouring to amend these measures, by making the remission of the death-

penalty extend to all crimes except that of murder; and he did not know that he should venture to except that—so convinced was he that capital punishment tended to the increase of crime and the impairing of justice.

The criminal-law commission continued its labours till 1845, when it expired; but revived, with an addition to its numbers, for the further prosecution of its objects. The commissioners had then presented eight reports—of high value. Besides the subjects already mentioned, they reported on the treatment of juvenile offenders, and upon the consolidation of the general statute-law. Their digest of our criminal law, entitled *The Act of Crimes and Punishments*, is considered to have fulfilled the purpose of their appointment, and to be a national benefit too great to be fully appreciated but through lapse of time. The new commission of 1845, which included the members of the former one, was appointed for the revision of this *Act of Crimes and Punishments*, in preparation for its being made the law of the land. A subsequent report, by the members of the old commission, on the law of procedure as regards indictable offences, was likewise given to the new commission for revision, in the hope of its also becoming law. These preparations for rendering the criminal law of England clear, intelligible, and accessible in its statement to all, and the prosecution of offences simple, direct, and certain, are an honourable sign of the times, and a credit to the administration of the period.

The session of 1839 was a memorable one to at least half the nation, for yielding the first act of what must become a course of legislation on behalf of the rights of women; who are in so many ways oppressed by the laws of England, that Lord Brougham's objection to the measure was based on his fear to touch a mass of laws so cruel and indefensible as that all must come down if any part were brought into question. The object now was to obtain for mothers of irreproachable conduct, who should be separated from their husbands, access to their young children by petition to the judges, in whose power it was to regulate the terms of that access. When this was clearly stated in the House in 1838—when it was declared that by the law of England a husband of the most profligate

character had the power of preventing his virtuous wife from ever seeing her children; that it was on behalf only of mothers irreproachable in the eye of the law that access to their children was asked for; and that this access was to be obtained only by permission of the equity judges—the object sought appeared so mere a fraction of what was due to domestic claims, so small a restitution of natural rights profusely stolen by a barbarous law, that the bill—called the Custody of Infants Bill—was passed by the Commons rapidly, and by large majorities. In the Lords, however, there was opposition; and Lord Brougham recorded his views in a speech which ought to be preserved as a specimen of the morality professed in high places in the nineteenth century. In Hansard, the speech stands entire, for the use of future historians, and the amazement of future moralists. What we have to do with here is the statement of the spirit and structure of the marriage-law as regards the rights of the wife, at the date of the controversy about the custody of the children.

'He was ready to admit—that the law was harsh and cruel in its operation on those cases which had been stated; and also that their small number was no guarantee that many more did not exist which had never seen the light. His noble friend had stated the evils of the present state of the law; he had shown how unjust the law was with regard to the treatment and the custody of the offspring of the wife by her husband; he had shown how it had operated harshly on the wife; and he had pointed out instances in which that law might have entailed evil on the children; and then he contended that his bill must be accepted as a remedy, because it would be a less evil than the evils pointed out. But there were many evils which the bill did not profess to remedy. Could anything be more harsh or cruel than that the wife's goods and chattels should be at the mercy of the husband, and that she might work and labour, and toil for an unkind father to support his family and children, while the husband repaid her with harshness and brutality; he all the time rioting and revelling in extravagance and dissipation, and squandering in the company of guilty paramours the produce of her industry? The

law was silent to the complaints of such a woman; or, if not silent, all it said was that in the sweat of her brow she should eat her bread; and not only so, but that in the sweat of her brow her husband should eat his bread, and spend the produce of her industry in insulting her by lavishing her property on his paramours. He knew that there were anomalies and a thousand contradictions in the marriage-law; but the existence of those anomalies and contradictions should operate as so many warnings against the introduction of new anomalies and changes in that marriage-law. . . . . In that action [an action for damages against an alleged paramour] the character of a woman was sworn away. Instances were known in which by collusion between the husband and a pretended paramour, the character of the wife had been destroyed. All this could take place, and yet the wife had no defence. She was excluded from Westminster Hall; and, behind her back, by the principles of our jurisprudence, her character was tried between the husband and the man called her paramour. But what was the case when the man was the guilty party? What legislation was there in favour of the wife? Was it just that in her sufferings she should have no remedy, no sufficient remedy; but rather be left to the mockery and insult of her husband? The husband might pursue his course; he might refuse to live with his wife, unless she went to Doctors' Commons, and demanded a restitution of conjugal rights, which no woman of delicacy could well do. A wife had the greatest difficulty to obtain a separation in the case of adultery. There had been two cases only before that House in which such relief had been granted; the one being a case in which incest had been proved. The present state of the law was such as to bring out a passive resistance on the part of the sex, who felt that they were not properly represented in the legislature. Having shown that the law was not more oppressive to the wife in this than in other cases, he now came to consider whether the remedy proposed for the alleged evil was appropriate.'

Lord Brougham's conclusion was adverse to the bill; but that was of little moment in view of the service he rendered to the oppressed by his exposure of the position

of married women in England. As he said, 'they were not properly represented in the legislature.' They were not represented at all. The party supposed, in works of political philosophy, to represent them are precisely those against whom legislation is needed for their protection. In the case before us, it was, as was openly declared at the time, precisely the men who despised and distrusted women, and had no conception of such an ideal as the virtuous matronage of England, who exerted themselves to prevent the passage of the law which should permit a blameless mother occasionally to see her children by an order from the equity judges. On that night, when Lord Brougham made his remarkable speech, the division was as remarkable as anything that took place. Two tales were told in the course of the debates on the bill, which melted the hearts of those who heard them. This was one source of interest. Another was the dread on the part of certain peers that this bill would grant too much liberty to Englishwomen, and that they would be encouraged to elope, if they had hope of any laws being made in their favour—though it was only women who had not eloped who were the objects of this bill. The result was, in the words of Hansard: 'The House divided; content, 9; not content, 11—majority, 2. Bill thrown out.' There follows, however, a sensible protest against this rejection of the bill, signed by Lords Holland and Lyndhurst, and the Duke of Sutherland.

The question was sure to come on again. When the position of mothers had once been argued, the nation which had sent out protectors of slaves, and which was striving to put an end to one-sided and tyrannical legislation in Jamaica, was not likely to neglect the suffering women at home whom tyranny had bereaved of their children. In the next session the bill was passed.

There were circumstances connected with the final effort which can never be forgotten by the lawyers who prepared the bill, the members of parliament who supported it, or any women who heard of them; for all the women of Great Britain were insulted by the methods pursued to defeat the bill. The case stands out clear from the law magazines and the reviews of the time. First, attacks

were made on the motives and characters of the originators and promoters of the bill; and this was made less difficult and more unmanly by the fact being well known that it was at the instance of a bereaved mother that redress was sought; as it is always at the instance of sufferers that remedial legislation is achieved. Next, an article appeared in the *British and Foreign Quarterly Review*, which was intended to operate against the bill, but which probably wrought the other way. This article proceeded on the supposition that all women are bent on mischief; and that the only way to manage them is to place them under the absolute despotism of their husbands. In the course of the argument or exposition, several of the most eminent ladies in Great Britain were insulted by name, and every woman in the world by implication. This article, or the substance of it, was reprinted in pamphlet form; and a copy of it was put into the hands of the peers as they entered the House, by Lord Wynford, the chief agitator against the bill. It did not answer its purpose with those peers who really knew anything of the matronage of England. The bill was read a first time in the Commons on the 30th of May, and the last time on the 28th of June. The will of the Commons had been sufficiently shown the year before. When the second reading in the Lords took place, Lord Wynford observed: 'His noble and learned friend had truly said that the custody of the children belonged by law to the father. That was a wise law, for the father was responsible for the rearing up of the children; but when unhappy differences separated the father and mother, to give the custody of the child to the father, and to allow access to it by the mother, was to injure the child; for it was natural to expect that the mother would not instil into the child any respect for the husband whom she might hate or despise. The effects of such a system would be most mischievous to the child, and would prevent its being properly brought up.' Lord Wynford did not go on to say whether he thought it would be good for the child, in the custody of a profligate father, to hear that father's way of speaking of the irreproachable mother—a way of speaking determined by the old rule that men hate those whom they have injured.

Lord Denman thought that 'some alteration, and that of a sweeping character, was absolutely necessary to the due administration of justice, and for the prevention of the frightful injuries to society which the present system gave birth to. . . . In the case of "The King *v.* Greenhill," which had been decided in 1836, before himself and the rest of the judges of the Court of King's Bench, he believed that there was not one judge who had not felt ashamed of the state of the law; and that it was such as to render it odious in the eyes of the country. The effect in that case was to enable the father to take his children from his young and blameless wife, and place them in the charge of a woman with whom he then cohabited. The present law was cruel to the wife, debasing to the husband, and dangerous, and probably ruinous, to the health and morals of the children, who could not have any such sure guarantee against corruption, under the tutelage of a profligate father, as the occasional care of a mother.' Lord Denman emphatically warned the Lords of the grave responsibility they would incur, both as regarded the morals of society, and their relation to the other House of parliament, if they threw out this bill, sent up now for the third time by such large majorities of the Commons. Lord Wynford's postponing amendment was negatived without a division; the bill was read a third time on the 2nd, and received the royal assent on the 17th, of August. If the queen understood the full significance of this bill, as the first blow struck at the oppression of English legislation in relation to women, it must have been with singular pleasure that she made the bill law.

Another piece of beneficent legislation of this period was highly conservative of the domestic purity and happiness of Great Britain.

Coleridge, when a young man, was walking through the Lake District, when he one day saw the postman deliver a letter to a woman at a cottage door. The woman turned it over and examined it, and then returned it, saying that she could not pay the postage, which was a shilling. Hearing that the letter was from her brother, Coleridge paid the postage, in spite of the manifest unwillingness of the woman. As soon as the postman was

out of sight, she showed Coleridge how his money had been wasted, as far as she was concerned. The sheet was blank. There was an agreement between her brother and herself, that as long as all went well with him, he should send a blank sheet in this way once a quarter; and she thus had tidings of him without expense of postage. Most people would have remembered this incident as a curious story to tell; but there was one mind which wakened up at once to a sense of the significance of the fact. It struck Mr. Rowland Hill that there must be something wrong in a system which drove a brother and sister to cheating, in order to gratify their desire to hear of one another's welfare. It was easy enough in those days for any one whose attention was turned towards the subject to collect a mass of anecdotes of such cheating. Parents and children, brothers and sisters, lovers and friends, must have tidings of each other, where there is any possibility of obtaining them; and those who had not shillings to spend in postage—who could no more spend shillings in postage than the class above them could spend hundreds of pounds on pictures—would resort to any device of communication, without thinking there was any harm in such cheating, because no money was kept back from government which could have been paid. There was curious dotting in newspapers, by which messages might be spelled out. Newspapers being franked by writing on the covers the names of members of parliament, a set of signals was arranged, by which the names selected were made to serve as a bulletin. Men of business so wrote letters as that several might go on one sheet, which was to be cut up and distributed. The smuggling of letters by carriers was enormous. After all expenditure of time and ingenuity, there remained, however, a terrible blank of enforced silence. We look back now with a sort of amazed compassion to the old crusading times, when warrior-husbands and their wives, grey-headed parents and their brave sons, parted with the knowledge that it must be months or years before they could hear even of one another's existence. We wonder how they bore the depth of silence. And we feel the same now about the families of polar voyagers. But, till a dozen years ago, it

did not occur to many of us how like this was the fate of the largest classes in our own country. The fact is, there was no full and free epistolary intercourse in the country, except between those who had the command of franks. There were few families in the wide middle class who did not feel the cost of postage a heavy item in their expenditure; and if the young people sent letters home only once a fortnight, the amount at the year's end was a rather serious matter. But it was the vast multitude of the lower orders who suffered like the crusading families of old, and the geographical discoverers of all time. When once their families parted off from home, it was a separation almost like that of death. The hundreds of thousands of apprentices, of shopmen, of governesses, of domestic servants, were cut off from family relations as if seas or deserts lay between them and home. If the shilling for each letter could be saved by the economy of weeks or months at first, the rarity of the correspondence went to increase the rarity; new interests hastened the dying out of old ones; and the ancient domestic affections were but too apt to wither away, till the wish for intercourse was gone. The young girl could not ease her heart by pouring out her cares and difficulties to her mother before she slept, as she can now, when the penny and the sheet of paper are the only condition of the correspondence. The young lad felt that a letter home was a somewhat serious and formal matter, when it must cost his parents more than any indulgence they ever thought of for themselves; and the old fun and light-heartedness were dropped from such domestic intercourse as there was. The effect upon morals of this kind of restraint is proved beyond a doubt by the evidence afforded in the army. It was a well-known fact, that in regiments where the commanding-officer was kind and courteous about franking letters for the privates, and encouraged them to write as often as they pleased, the soldiers were more sober and manly, more virtuous and domestic in their affections, than where difficulty was made by the indolence or stiffness of the franking officer. To some persons, this aspect has ever appeared the most important of the various interesting aspects of the postage reform achieved by Mr. Rowland

Hill. As for others, it is impossible to estimate the advantages of the change. In reading Cowper's life, how strange now seems his expenditure of time, thought, and trouble, about obtaining franks for the manuscripts and proofs of his Homer; now, when every mail carries packets between authors, printers, and publishers, for a few pence, without any teasing solicitation for franks, or dependence upon anybody's good offices! What a mass of tradesmen's patterns and samples, of trade circulars, of bills and small sums of money, of music and books, of seeds and flowers, of small merchandise and friendly gifts, of curious specimens passing between men of science, of bulletins of health, to satisfy anxious hearts, is every day sent abroad over the land; and now spreading over wide oceans and across continents, through Rowland Hill's discovery of a way to throw down the old barriers, and break through the ancient silence! It was truly a beneficent legislation which made this change.

It was not easy, however, to make the change. Long after the case was rendered clear—long after the old evils and the new possibility were made as evident as facts and figures can make any proposition—there was difficulty—vexatious, even exasperating difficulty—in carrying the reform. One great obstacle at the outset was, that the Post-office has, through all time, declared itself perfect. As the Duke of Wellington declared of our representative system, that it could not be improved, while the grass and trees of Old Sarum were sending two members to parliament, so the Post-office declared itself perfect when carts and saddle-horses carried its bags; and again, when Mr. Palmer's mail-coaches—declared an impossible creation in 1797—brought the Bath letters to London in eighteen hours, and could take no notice of out-of-the-way towns and small villages; and again, when a letter from Uxbridge, posted on Friday night, could not reach Gravesend till Tuesday morning; and, finally, when the state of postal communication in Great Britain was what has been indicated above. No postal reforms of a comprehensive character have ever originated in the Post-office itself. This is natural; because its officers are wholly occupied with its interior affairs, and cannot look abroad so as to

compare its provisions with the growing needs of society. It required a pedestrian traveller in the Lake District, making his wayside observations, and following up the suggestion; an investigator who could ascertain something of the extent of smuggling of letters; a man of an open heart, who could enter into family sympathies; a man of philosophical ingenuity, who could devise a remedial scheme; and a man of business, who could fortify such a scheme with an impregnable accuracy, to achieve such a reform. The man was among us, and the thing is done.

Mr. Hill ascertained that 'the cost of mere transit incurred upon a letter sent from London to Edinburgh, a distance of 400 miles, is not more than one thirty-sixth part of a penny.' When this was once made clearly known to the people of London and Edinburgh, it was not likely that they would be long content to pay a shilling or upwards. It was not likely that rich merchants would be content; and much less the multitude to whom a shilling was a prohibitory duty on correspondence. It would strike them all that if government received such a profit as this on the transmission of letters, the government must be getting much too rich at the expense of letter-writers, and to the injury of persons who would fain write letters if they could. If it appeared, however, that the revenue from the Post-office was unaccountably small — that it was diminishing in actual amount, instead of increasing with the spread of population —it was clear that the Post-office could not be so perfect as it thought itself; that it was not answering its purpose; that, whatever might be its mismanagement, and consequent expensiveness, there must also be an enormous amount of smuggling of letters. And the facts were so. Between the years 1815 and 1835, the Post-office annual revenue had declined; while, on its own existing terms, it ought, from the increase of population, to have risen £507,700—from the mere increase of population it ought to have risen thus much, without regard to the improvement of education, and the spread of commerce, which had taken place in those twenty years.

The way to deal with smuggling is now very well understood. To extinguish smuggling, it is necessary to

lower duties to the point which makes smuggling not worth while. In some of the most populous districts of England, it was believed that the number of letters illegally conveyed by carriers, and delivered in an awkward and irregular sort of way at the cost of a penny each, far exceeded that of the letters sent through the Post-office. The penny posts established in towns were found to answer well. Putting together these and a hundred other facts with that of the actual cost of transmission of an Edinburgh letter, Mr. Hill proposed to reduce the cost of all letters not exceeding half an ounce in weight to a penny. The shock to the Post-office of such an audacious proposal was extreme; and so was the amazement of the public at the opening of such a prospect. As the actual cost of transmission to any part of the kingdom reached by the mail was less than a farthing, the penny rate might be made uniform—to the saving of a world of time and trouble—and still the profit or tax would be 200 per cent. Mr. Hill's calculation was, that if the postage could be paid in advance, so as to save time and labour in delivery, and other facilities of communication be established, which he pointed out, and the postage be reduced to a penny for half-ounce letters, the increase in the number of letters, by the stoppage of smuggling and the new cheapness, must soon be fourfold. When it became fourfold, the net revenue, after defraying the expense of conveying franks and newspapers, would amount to £1,278,000 per annum —a sum only £280,000 less than the existing revenue. As no one supposed that the increase would ultimately be so little as fourfold, there was every prospect that the Post-office revenue would, in a few years, recover its then present amount directly; while it was certain that, under other heads, the revenue must be largely increased through the stimulus given to commerce by improved communication. Lord Lowther, the postmaster-general, had already proposed the cheap transmission of prices current, as important to the interests of trade; and if the same advantage could be extended to all papers connected with commerce, there was no saying how great would be the stimulus communicated to business of every kind. When Mr. Hill proposed his plan, the revenue was in a flourishing state; in a state

which would justify such an experiment as this for such ends. It is well that none foreknew the reverse which was at hand, and the long depression which must ensue; for none might have had courage to go into the enterprise; but that reverse served admirably as a test of the reform; and through the long depression which ensued, Mr. Hill's plan, though cruelly maimed, and allowed at first no fair chance, worked well while everything else was working ill. The revenue from the Post-office went on steadily increasing, while every other branch of the national income was declining or stationary.

Some years before this time Mr. Charles Knight had suggested that the best way of collecting a penny postage on newspapers would be by the use of stamped covers. Mr. Hill now availed himself of this idea, acknowledging its origin. By means of a penny letter-stamp, the Post-office might be saved all the trouble of collecting postage, and the delivery be immensely accelerated. If residents in towns would have generally adopted his suggestion of having letter-boxes with a slit, affixed to the inside of their street-doors, it would have been a further important saving of time—the postman having only to drop the letters into the box, knock at the door, and run on, instead of having to wait for the answer to his knock. This piece of justice to the scheme is not yet practised nearly to the extent that it ought to be; but, notwithstanding this, and many other needless impediments to the transaction of Post-office business, the quantity of work done without increase of the staff is prodigious.

Mr. Hill had to endure something of the bitter disappointment which is the usual portion of great social reformers; but, from the enlightenment of the age, his mortifications were neither so complete nor so durable as those of many benefactors of society. He first proffered his plan privately to the government. Next, he published his first pamphlet on Post-office reform, when the commercial world became interested at once, and forced the scheme on the indifferent and indolent administration. Mr. Wallace moved, but without avail, for a select committee of the Commons, to investigate and report upon the plan, in February 1838; the government declaring, in both Houses,

that the matter was under their consideration. Petitions came up to parliament from chambers of commerce, the common council of London, the merchants and bankers of London, literary societies, and other bodies, which indicated to the ministers that this was not a matter to be trifled with. They showed their interest in a way which amused their friends and enemies alike—by proposing little schemes, and alterations, and devices of their own, which proved only that they were very courageous in one direction, if not in another. They feared endangering the revenue; but they did not fear to place themselves and their little notions side by side with the man and the scheme in whom and in which the nation placed confidence. Neither they nor the administration who succeeded them could see that the plan was a grand whole, which demanded to be left entire, and to be worked by him who had devised it; and both cabinets were for pulling it in pieces themselves, or by permission to the old Post-office to do it—being ready, all the time, to make its author responsible for the disasters that might happen through the very mutilation of the scheme. Mr. Spring Rice won for himself the title of 'the footman's friend,' given by a merry newspaper when he proffered his own little scheme of a new postage which should save flunkies the trouble of carrying ladies' notes. When the special committee was granted, and up to nearly the close of its labours, in August 1838, the chairman—a government official—and other members of his way of thinking, declared to their friends in the clubs and in drawing-rooms, that the present agitation would probably induce a considerable reduction of the rate of postage; but, as to the adoption of Mr. Hill's plan, it was the most absurd idea that any one could entertain—too absurd to be worth a reply. Some of these gentlemen continued to say the same thing till within six weeks of the introduction of Mr. Hill's measure into the House of Commons by the chancellor of the exchequer, on the 5th of July 1839. The evidence obtained in committee was irresistible; the demand of a trial of the plan by the commercial world and the general public was irresistible; the pressure of reason and will together was irresistible; and the plan was affirmed by a

majority of 102 in the Commons, and made law on the 17th of August following.

For a few weeks a uniform four-penny rate was charged, that the Post-office might not be overwhelmed at once by a deluge of penny letters, before its officials had become accustomed to the new method of charging by weight; but on the 10th of January 1840, the real scheme was tried. The inland rate was now a penny for every prepaid packet not exceeding ½ oz. in weight, and 2*d.* for every such packet not paid in advance; double the rate for packets above ½ oz. and under 1 oz.; and 2*d.* more if prepaid, 4*d.* if unpaid, for every oz. or fraction of an oz. beyond. There was much amusing excitement everywhere about putting the plan into practice; some—but not enough—affixing of letter-boxes to house-doors; some mistakes, such as forgetting to prepay—at which correspondents were wrathful—or slipping a letter and a penny together into the box at the Post-office; a great stimulus to the manufacture of frank weights; and a great fertility of invention about envelopes, stamps, paper that could not be imitated, and gums that were warranted harmless and seemly. Mulready furnished a design for an envelope which had much merit—but two great defects; it did not leave space for a long address, or one made long by the scrawling of the illiterate; and it rendered stale some signs of emotion which should never be made irreverently familiar—as the uplifted hands and eyes of the widowed mother who is receiving a letter from an absent son. That envelope was soon laid aside, and the more convenient stamp introduced of the queen's head in one corner. When this stamp became procurable either separately or on the envelope, and when its being on a blue ground came to denote its being a 2*d.* stamp, the machinery of convenience was at length complete to the public as far as letters were concerned. The stamps came into use on the 6th of May. Franking entirely ceased on the day when the penny rate was introduced; and the people were amused with the idea that the queen herself was paying postage. This abolition of the franking privilege was declared by those who had previously been free from postage charges to be more felt by them than

they could have supposed possible. They found their postage expenditure to be mounting up to many pounds in the year; and a multitude of them, who had not before considered the matter, now saw how right it was that the aristocracy should pay their share towards a tax which had hitherto never touched them, while it bore hardly upon the poorest in the land who could read and write.

The results of the plan after a year's adoption were as encouraging as could be at all expected under the unfavourable circumstances of commercial distress, and of the plan being tried by halves. The reduction of postage was tried, without the accompanying condition of improved facilities in the transmission and delivery of letters; and large expenses were incurred which had nothing to do with the new plan, but which went into the general account of the Post-office. The increase in the number of chargeable letters was two and a half fold, and these yielded more than half the former gross revenue of the Post-office; the increase of expense in connection with the plan was about £44,000, and the actual net revenue was £465,000—a falling off of nearly three-fourths from the former net revenue. Mr. Hill had predicted a state of things somewhat less favourable than this as the result of the first year's experiment, under these particular heads; but he had hoped that the profitable parts of his plan would have been tried, as well as those which must bring present loss. Those who understood the matter, however, had now no further doubt of ultimate success, even in regard to the pecuniary returns of the Post-office, while the increased facilities for business, for the promotion of science and the arts, and for family intercourse, were felt and acknowledged in the remotest corners of the British Islands. As Mr. Hill had himself the pleasure of knowing, 'the postman had now to make long rounds through humble districts where, heretofore, his knock was seldom heard.' As for the number of letters sent by post, it appears to have been at this time more than double what it was before the reduction of postage. There was reason to suppose, that if the plan was fairly tried, five years would suffice to restore the gross revenue of the Post-office, while the advantages to other branches of the

revenue would be meantime perpetually on the increase. The proportion of prepaid letters was continually on the increase as people learned to manage their own share of the plan; and this incessantly diminished the labour of the Post-office. The transmission of small sums of money by Post-office orders was becoming more and more common, not only aiding the transaction of business, but carrying comfort into thousands of humble homes. The stamps themselves became a convenient form of small currency. The illicit conveyance of letters ceased at once, when the Post-office became the cheapest means of conveyance. Thus the prospect was cheering in every way but one. The one drawback was that the plan was not fairly worked. The Post-office authorities were hostile to the change; and neither the existing government nor that which succeeded it supported Mr. Hill. Even while he was engaged under the Melbourne ministry, to superintend the working of his own plan, it was adopted only by halves; and immediately on the succession of the Peel administration, he was dismissed, and the scheme left, as far as the public would allow it, to the mercy of the hostile Post-office authorities.

At the end of three years, no part of Mr. Hill's plan had been fully tried but that of the reduction of postage. Little was done towards the simplification of arrangements or the introduction of economy; and almost nothing in regard to increased speed in the delivery, or facility for the dispatch of letters. The times were fearfully bad; yet, according to a return made to the House of Lords, the results were that the gross revenue had reached two-thirds of its old amount, and that the net revenue of the Post-office was increasing from year to year, while every other branch of revenue was decreasing. But Mr. Hill was only for a time cast out and discouraged. All parties became convinced at last, as the public at large were throughout, that he was essential to the working of his own plan; and he was solicited to return to his task of superintendence in the Post-office. Since that time various reforms and beneficial arrangements have been introduced; and even his ultimate scheme of a parcel-post is in partial operation. In time, the nation will have the whole.

Meanwhile it hardly needs to be pointed out, that though the fiscal results of the plan are those which must be first considered by parliament and other branches of the government, they are not those which are most important to the nation at large. It is all very well that the revenue should rise to what it was before, and that increase should be perceptible in other branches of the revenue from the stimulus of aid afforded to commerce; but the nation is far more deeply interested in the operation of the scheme on the promotion of science, on the daily convenience to millions of persons, and especially on the domestic morals of the people. The blessings which have thus accrued are too vast for estimate. It is believed most firmly by those who know best—by those whose walk is among the great middle and greater lower classes of society—that no one has done so much as Mr. Rowland Hill in our time in drawing closer the domestic ties of the nation, and extending the influences of home over the wide-spreading, stirring, and most diverse interests of social life in our own country. And from our own country, the blessing is reaching many more; and cheap postage is becoming established in one nation after another, extending the benefits of the invention among myriads of men who have not yet heard the name of its author. The poet's shilling given in the Lake District was well laid out.

CHAPTER XVI.

Privilege of Parliament—State of the Case—The Sheriffs—The House—The Court of Queen's Bench—Bill of Enactment—Unsatisfactory Conclusion—Imbecility of the Administration—Queen's Speech—Finance—Last Resort—The Budget—Fixed Corn-duty proposed—Defeat on the Sugar-duties—Vote of Want of Confidence—Dissolution of Parliament.

ONE of the last subjects of importance discussed in parliament before the Melbourne ministry went out of power was the privilege question, the origin of which has been related. On account of some amusing incidents which

attended the discussion, and of the intricacy of the question, the press and the public treated the matter with a levity or an indifference which appear much out of place amidst the seriousness of an historical review. The grave truth of the case was that an apparent incompatibility had arisen between the privileges of the Commons and the rights of the subject; and the Court of Queen's Bench and parliament were directly at issue. The affair had become what is called a dead-lock. No one could see how a step could be taken in any direction but into deadly mischief; and yet it was necessary that something should be done.

In November 1836, Chief-justice Denman had declared from the bench his opinion that the authority of the House of Commons could not justify the publication of a libel; whereas the House and its officers maintained that the publisher of their reports was not subject to action for libel, as he published under the authority of the parliament; and the question of the powers and privileges of parliament could not be brought into discussion or decision before any other court or tribunal than parliament itself, without subjecting the parties concerned to the displeasure and the penalties of parliament for a high breach of its privileges. This was the decision arrived at by the special committee which reported on the subject in May 1837.

The case now stood thus. Messrs. Hansard, the parliamentary printers, had published certain reports on prisons, in one of which a book, published by J. J. Stockdale, was called 'obscene and disgusting in the extreme.' Stockdale prosecuted the Hansards for a libel. The Hansards pleaded the authority of parliament. The judge, Chief-justice Denman, declared that parliament could not authorise the publication of libels on individuals. Parliament not only insisted that it could publish what it pleased, but that itself was the sole judge of its own powers and privileges, and that for any person to call them in question in any court was a high breach of privilege. Both parties supposed themselves engaged in vindicating the liberty of the subject—Lord Denman believing that he was saving individuals from being

oppressed by the most powerful body in the realm; and the House of Commons believing that the liberty of the subject was essentially involved in the liberties of the representative and legislative body.

Stockdale continued his prosecution of the Hansards. The Hansards, who put themselves under the protection of the House, were directed to plead. The verdict was given against them, and damages were assessed which the House directed the Hansards to pay; because, having pleaded, they could not repudiate the result of the trial.

On the 31st of July 1839, the Hansards informed the House that they were threatened with a similar action by another person, in relation to another report. They were this time desired to take no notice, to make no preparations, as the action threatened would be regarded by the House as a breach of its privileges, and punished accordingly. The matter was supposed to be settled by the person said to be aggrieved in the report declaring that he had never had any intention of prosecuting the printers. But Stockdale was not quiet yet. Before August was out, he brought a third action for the same libel—the sale of every fresh copy being considered in law a separate publication of the libel. The Hansards were directed by the speaker to let matters take their course; and they merely served Stockdale with a formal notice of the resolutions of the House of Commons of May 1837 and August 1839. The damages were laid at £50,000. As the Hansards would not plead, judgment went against them by default; and a jury in the sheriff's court assessed the damages at £600.

The sheriffs were brought into the affair sorely against their will; and it was their embarrassing predicament which caused the mirth of the newspapers throughout the rest of the transaction. The sheriffs of London—together constituting one sheriff of Middlesex—were Messrs. William Evans and John Wheelton. First, they petitioned the courts to allow time, before the assessing of the damages, that parliament might be in session; but no delay was permitted, and they were obliged to proceed to the assessment on the 12th of November. Stockdale then pressed them on, and they were compelled to seize the

printing-office, premises, and stock-in-trade of the Hansards. On their reporting on the 29th of November that they had done so, Stockdale served them with an order to sell the property, that he might obtain his damages. The sheriffs were thus placed between two fires of wrath. The House of Commons was pledged to punish them, on the one hand, for daring to meddle with its printer; and the Court of Queen's Bench would punish them, on the other hand, if they refused to levy the money. Either the speaker would send them to Newgate, or Chief-justice Denman would send them to the Marshalsea. Again they asked for time; and some delay was granted—until the 19th of December—for making their return. The sale was fixed for the 17th; but to avoid the scandal and other evils of the spectacle, the money was paid into the sheriff's court on the night of the 16th. To put off extremities as long as possible, the sheriffs delayed paying the money to Stockdale. The Court of Queen's Bench granted a rule, calling upon them to show cause, on the 17th of January, why they did not pay the money. Meantime parliament assembled; and on the 16th, Lord J. Russell laid the whole case before the House, and pressed for an immediate decision of this perplexing and dangerous matter.

The House might now either follow its ancient method of asserting its privilege by committing those who had violated it—in which case, it must commit not only Stockdale and his attorney, Howard, but the sheriffs and their officers, and the chief-justice and his coadjutors; or it might yield its privileges so far as to let the Hansards plead, and so permit the question of privilege to come before the courts; or it might yield another of its privileges, by confining the circulation of its reports among its own members; or it might now pass a bill to authorise such a publication of their reports as had been made by Messrs. Hansard. The one thing that was impossible was that the House could allow matters to remain as they were. It had unfortunately vacillated in its course, by authorising the Hansards to plead in one case, and forbidding them to do so in the next—and now it must repair the mischief of its own vacillation.

The House decided on asserting its privileges. For the

sake of decency, or what was called public convenience, it would refrain from calling the judges to its bar, though it had indubitable power to do so. It would endeavour to stop the assaults upon its privileges by laying hold of the inferior officers who were acting in contempt. The sheriffs were therefore, as it was decided by a large majority, to appear at the bar of the House, bringing with them all the documents and authorities under which they had acted.

On the next night, January 17, it was decided that Stockdale should be committed under the speaker's warrant, for breach of privilege. On the 18th, the sheriffs were brought up to the bar of the House. They admitted that the money was still in their agent's hands. They were ordered to attend again on Monday the 20th. By that day it became known that the Court of Queen's Bench would the next morning be moved to compel the sheriffs to pay the money to Stockdale; and the House must therefore act vigorously this night. It decided to order the sheriffs to refund the money. The sheriffs were summoned to the bar, and appeared in their scarlet robes, when the speaker informed them of the order of the House that they should refund the money, and invited them to speak, if they had anything to say. They bowed in silence, and withdrew. Lord J. Russell then moved the commitment of the sheriffs for contempt; but the subject was left over to the next day, when two petitions were presented from the sheriffs, praying that they might not be punished for endeavouring to do their duty under the orders of the Court of Queen's Bench. Their petitions were not received, and they were committed to the custody of the sergeant-at-arms. Stockdale's attorney, Howard, was called in; and as he expressed sorrow at having offended the House, he was merely reprimanded and discharged.

Three days afterwards, the sergeant-at-arms came to the bar of the House to know what he was to do. He had been served with a writ of Habeas Corpus from the Court of Queen's Bench, commanding him to produce the sheriffs in that court. The House directed him to inform the court that he held them in custody for breach of the privileges of the House. He took them to the court, accordingly, to make this declaration. It was a remarkable

scene, and one which would not safely bear a repetition. As the sheriffs in their robes passed along in custody, from their apartments under the House to the court, they were loudly cheered; and the lawyers in the court made no secret of their sympathy being with the prisoners. Everybody, of all parties, pitied them as victims in a quarrel about which it was no business of theirs to decide. The court declared the reasons of the sergeant-at-arms to be good and sufficient; and he took away his prisoners as he had brought them.

On the same day, the 25th of January, Stockdale, though in prison, commenced a new action against the Hansards, his agent being the same Howard who had just expressed his sorrow for having offended the House. Howard was ordered up again on the 27th, when the affair was next discussed; but Howard was not to be found. A warrant for his arrest was issued on the 4th of February; and on the 6th he was brought up in custody, and committed to Newgate. The House had now two sets of prisoners in different places of confinement; and nobody could conceive what was to be done with them, or how any end of this embarrassing matter was to be reached. The House was so unpopular that it was clear that the general public did not at all comprehend the nature and extent of the dispute. By some, Lord Denman was regarded as an audacious judge, setting up his judgment and his court against the mighty popular body of the Commons; while by others he was lauded as a defender of the rights of the subject against an overbearing parliament. Everybody pitied the sheriffs, and everybody quizzed them. The print-shops were full of caricatures of them—sitting in their well-warmed apartment, with a smoking dinner on the table, or in court-dresses with a circle of admiring sympathisers pressing consolation upon them. Meantime, here, on the 7th of February, were matters as before at a dead-lock.

Sir R. Peel said that the time was now come for the ministers to propose some comprehensive course for extricating the House from its difficulty. Lord J. Russell was responsible for the peace of the country; and if he could say that he hoped to pass a bill which should make the powers of the House certain and complete, he would

undoubtedly have the support of the House. On being called to a division, the members decided not to release the sheriffs. On the 12th, however, it was certified by the medical attendant of one of the sheriffs, Mr. Wheelton, that his patient's life would be endangered by a longer confinement; and Mr. Wheelton was released without payment of his fees. An attempt to procure Mr. Evans's discharge, on a plea of health, failed, two days, and again a fortnight, afterwards. Then, on the 17th of February, there was notice of a fifth action of Stockdale against the Hansards; and the House passed a vote of censure and threat. There were more arrests; and the odium excited by these proceedings, while no progress was apparently made towards a conclusion, was so great that the affair was now truly an alarming one. The time of the House was occupied, night after night, to the injury of public business; placards met the eye on the walls of London at every turn, all denouncing the tyranny of the House; and in the country, the health of the sheriffs was drunk at public dinners with three times three. Everybody could see the tyrannical aspect of the affair, while few understood the supreme importance of the privileges of parliament; and there were not many newspapers wise enough to give the information. By this time, the public were saying and hoping that parliament would be beaten at last; and this hastened the action of the House. Sir R. Peel was of opinion that it would be expedient now to resort to enactment, the House reserving to itself the power to act without it if the process of legislation should fail. This was done. Lord J. Russell brought in a bill on the 5th of March, by which it was enacted that the courts should stay all proceedings against any parliamentary papers, on the production of a certificate, signed by either the lord chancellor or the speaker, that such papers were printed by order of parliament. A clause in this bill put a stop to the proceedings against the Hansards. The motion to bring in the bill was carried by a majority of 149, in a House of 257. On the same evening the House decided to discharge Mr. Sheriff Evans, under an injunction to attend the House on the 6th of April.

Then the indefatigable Mr. Howard, Stockdale's attorney,

instituted a prosecution against the officers of the House, for trespass in entering and searching his dwelling when they were in search of himself. The attorney-general was for allowing this action to proceed, as the question turned on the fact whether the officers had exceeded their duty or not. The House agreed with him by a majority of 91, though the solicitor-general and other eminent members were in opposition.

In the Upper House, some of the peers, besides Lord Denman, wished so to amend the bill now sent up to them as to restrict the power of publishing libels, and prevent the House of Commons from being the only authorised libeller in the country; but the majority saw that, if this were to be done, the present was not the moment for doing it. Such a provision, made now, would be a confession of wrong, and a surrender on the part of parliament which neither fact nor policy would allow. The bill became law on the 14th of April. On the 15th, Mr. Sheriff Evans was released from his obligation to appear, and some of the minor recusants were discharged from custody. But the House refused to release either Howard or Stockdale. On the 14th of May, however, the House agreed, on the motion of Mr. Duncombe, to let them go. And thus the matter was said to be concluded.

Every one felt that it was not a satisfactory—not a genuine conclusion. The privilege of parliament was not vindicated, nor the Court of Queen's Bench either justified or condemned. The particular case about publishing reports was doubtfully provided for in the future by a present act of compromise; but nothing was settled about the right of any party to discuss the privilege of parliament before the courts. Many openings were left for renewals of this painful and undignified kind of controversy; and perhaps the most important result was the warning given of this danger, and the hint to avoid, if possible, by the exercise of careful skill, temper, and knowledge, all occasion of collision between parliament with its privileges and the courts which protect the liberty of the subject.

When parliament met for the session of 1841, there was some curiosity to know what the ministers would do.

Weak as they had long been, they were known to be weaker than ever, through some losses which had happened during the recess. They had now so often shown that they could adhere to office under circumstances apparently hopeless—it was so evident that their fixed idea was that it was they who must govern the country, and that they relied on royal favour to the utmost extent to which it could go—that a kind of wonder had grown up whether anything could dislodge them, short of a dangerous manifestation of popular discontent; and it had become a matter of calculation how that discontent could be manifested in a manner least inconsistent with the public peace. The ministers themselves were now soon to point out the way.

The speech was so framed as to make the address a matter of safe discussion. It was on domestic subjects that antagonism was most likely to arise; and the speech was confined to topics of foreign policy. The most prominent subject of the session was the renewal of the powers of the poor-law commissioners for five years. After long debates and much wearisome and intricate discussion, the ministers obtained a majority; but the measure was dropped, with some others of importance, in the prospect of the dissolution of parliament which presently ensued. An alteration in the declaration taken by municipal officers, intended to open a way for Jews into corporation offices, was carried in the Commons, but thrown out by the Peers. When various measures had been brought forward by various parties, only to be negatived or thrown out, the time was come—the 30th of April—for the chancellor of the exchequer to make his financial statement; and this, it was believed, would be the occasion which should decide the fate of the ministry. It was known that the statement would be a melancholy one; and while the country was speculating on how the government would get over this crowning difficulty, it was entertained—really amused—with one of the Whig surprises, which had by this time failed to do more than amuse or excite contempt—by Lord J. Russell giving notice that on the 31st of May he should move for a committee of the whole House, to consider the acts of parliament relating to the trade in corn.

No stronger indication of desperation could be given than this. The Anti-Corn-Law League was becoming strong, and carrying the people with it exactly in proportion as it spread knowledge of the case among them. This novel policy of the cabinet was obviously a desperate snatch at a popular interest—a last effort to recover popular support. The social determination to have a free-trade in corn was growing in strength from year to year; but the question was too important to be delivered into the charge of the Melbourne ministry. There was as yet no such pressure from without as would make them earnest, and keep them steady, in the conduct of a reform so important. That the members of the cabinet should all be true converts already, was wholly incredible; while it was only too credible that they would grasp at any means of popular support which should enable them to remain in office. If they, whose whole pretension was that of being reformers, had not throughout seen the truth in regard to the corn-laws, they saw it now too late for their respectability. A conversion which might have been truly respectable in a Conservative ministry placed under new lights, was in the highest degree suspicious in a reform administration which had been for several years in the illuminated position. The elections were soon to show what the people thought of this demonstration; and meantime the House was in a state of high excitement.

The chancellor of the exchequer had to announce a deficiency of nearly two millions. Mr. Baring went back to Lord Althorp's propositions about the timber and sugar duties, by changes in which he hoped to secure an increase of £1,300,000. For the other £400,000 required, he looked to the result of Lord J. Russell's motion on the corn-laws. The existing deficiency was to be made up by an issue of exchequer bills, and a resort to savings-bank funds. It did not strengthen popular confidence in the ministry that the revenue was now deficient, year by year; and that, instead of a remedy, loans were resorted to in time of peace. There was a prevalent discontent at Whig management of financial affairs; a prevalent conviction that the Whig ministry could not manage financial affairs; and a prevalent indignation that they kept in their own hands a business of such

transcendent importance which they were incompetent to manage. During the month which was appointed to intervene between the introduction of the budget and of Lord J. Russell's propositions to alter the corn-laws, there was great agitation in the country. The ministers hoped, of course, to appropriate the aid of the whole Anti-Corn-Law party, and thus gave them time to organise their support; but there was as much commotion on the other side: a commotion which extended itself into the House of Lords, where the prime-minister was brought to acknowledge that he had changed his views, declaring that his former opinion was grounded on purely temporary circumstances; a limitation which he had certainly not been aware of when he declared, not long before, that the maldest of all the mad things he had ever heard of was the idea of giving up the corn-laws. Lord J. Russell found it best not to delay his announcement of the terms of his motion beyond the 7th of May. On that night, he declared his intention of proposing a fixed duty of 8*s.* per quarter on wheat, of 5*s.* on rye, of 4*s.* 6*d.* on barley, and of 3*s.* 4*d.* on oats.

The debate on the sugar-duties had to be gone through first. It lasted eight nights, and ended in the defeat of ministers by a majority of 36, in a House of 598. It was universally concluded that now the ministers would resign; and the House was divided between indignation and amusement when the chancellor of the exchequer rose in his place, the next night of meeting, and gave notice, as if nothing unusual had occurred, that on the Monday following, he should move the usual annual sugar-duties. Lord J. Russell then moved that the House should adjourn to that Monday. While the ministers were receiving the taunts of the opposition amidst the silence of the reformers present, the news spread along the crowded avenues of the House, together with the intimation that the corn question was to be brought forward on the 4th of June. The policy of the ministers was now supposed to be to endure any amount of defeat previous to the corn debate, and then to dissolve the House, in order to throw themselves upon the country as free-traders, when the agitation should be at its height. The whole country was immedi-

ately busy preparing for the elections; and Lord J. Russell indicated this as his reason for dropping the Poor-law Bill, saying that he would not give occasion for speeches in parliament intended for the hustings. The annual sugar-duties were agreed to; Sir R. Peel declaring that the proper opportunity for defeating ministers was not on that occasion, but in the form of a regular vote of want of confidence. This vote he obtained on the 4th of June, by a majority of one, in a House of 623 members. His resolution was: 'That her majesty's ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the House measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare; and that their continuance in office under such circumstances is at variance with the spirit of the constitution.' Lord J. Russell promised to make known on the next Monday the intentions of government; and on that day the avenues to the House were crowded as before.

The ministers, or a majority of them, had agreed that their best course would be to relinquish all discussion of the corn-laws for the present; to take a vote of supply for the exigencies of the public service for some months to come; and then, as they could rely upon no more majorities in that House, to dissolve parliament and appeal to the country. They had tendered their advice to the crown to lose no time in dissolving parliament, and summoning a new one, in order to ascertain the opinion of the nation.

As might be expected, the House emptied rapidly after this explanation; and members dispersed themselves over the country, to manage their elections. It was universally understood that this election was of the last importance. In 1835, Sir R. Peel's fine statesmanship failed, because parties were yet too strong for him—too strong yet from the forces of the reform movement. His short administration had been of use in proving the increased liberality of his tendencies, and his good faith in purposing to maintain reforms actually and deliberately achieved. Since then, the Whigs had declined in power and repute; and they now held no place at all in popular expectation. It remained to be seen whether the popular choice of future rule would turn towards him or them; whether it might

not appear to the nation at large, as it did to many individual observers, as probable that Sir R. Peel would prove truly a popular leader, as it was now clearly impossible that the Whig ministry should ever be so again.

A small number of members remained in London to complete some necessary legislation; but various measures of importance were dropped. On the 22nd of June, parliament was prorogued by the queen in person to the 29th of the same month; and on the 23rd, a royal proclamation declared the parliament dissolved. The writs now issued were made returnable on the 19th of August.

Such were the circumstances under which the thirteenth parliament was dissolved, after a duration of four sessions, and nearly four years. How the nation would declare its opinions in the choice of the next was felt to be a matter of the deepest interest to the sovereign, the ministers, the land-owning peers, and the suffering people.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Queen at Guildhall—The Coronation—Her Marriage—Birth of Heir to the Throne—State of the People—Crime—*Times* Testimonial—Game Laws—Lord Suffield—Opium-eating—Church-building and Bishoprics—Religious Intolerance—Grace Darling—Agricultural Associations—India Cotton—Niger Expedition—*President* Steamer—Royal Exchange burnt—Other Fires—Balloons—Thames Conservancy—The Eglinton Tournament—Mummy Inquest—Trial of a Peer—Suicides from the Monument—India Mails—Acarus Crossii—Deaths—Men of Science—Travellers—Court Personages—Wealthy Personages—Politicians—Religious Philanthropists—Musicians—Architects—Artists—Actors—Men of Letters—Orientalists—Authors—Light Literature—Historians—Philosophers.

ONE of the strongest and most genial interests of the period now closing was the young queen. If the kindliness and open heart of William IV. had been refreshing after the temper and manners of his predecessor, the youthfulness and gaiety of the new sovereign were now really exhilarating after the spectacle of so many years—of a feeble old man in the royal carriage. At first, the queen was in

high spirits—liking to see and be seen; driving in the parks when they were most thronged; dining at Guildhall; and saying, as she went down to open the parliament: 'Let my people see me.' There were smiles on her face, and she met nothing but smiles and acclamations. On that 9th of November when she went to dine at Guildhall, London did not look like itself, with its gravelled streets, and avenues of green boughs and flags; and the old hall itself, usually so dingy and dirty, seemed to have grown young for the occasion—brilliant as it was with decorations, with crimson cloth and silk, with flags and banners, and armour glittering among the innumerable lights. Under the magnificent canopy, in the gorgeous chair of state, was seen no portly elderly gentleman, fatigued almost before the festivities had begun; but the slight figure of the young girl, all health and spirits, who half rose and bowed round to her relations—her mother, her uncles, aunts, and cousins—when the health of the royal family was proposed. There were reviews in the Parks, where all London seemed to have poured out to see the queen, who, as was always said, 'looked remarkably well,' and enjoyed the greetings of her subjects. Then there was the coronation—that bright day when there was not standing-room left for another spectator anywhere within view of any part of the pageant, and yet no accident of the smallest consequence happened from morning till night: an early morning and a late night; for the first rays of the midsummer sun that slanted down through the high windows of Westminster Abbey shone upon the jewels of whole rows of peeresses, and upon scarlet uniforms scattered among court dresses, and church vestments, and splendid female array; and the illuminations of that night were not out when the next sun rose. It was a day of great fatigue and excitement; but all present in the abbey defied fatigue, for all hoped that this might be the last coronation they might ever have the opportunity of seeing. The sovereign herself was nearly the youngest person present; and the general hope was that she might live to be as old as any one there. The sensation on her entering was a wonderful moment. Before, a painful sleepiness had oppressed those who had sat so many

hours in that strangest of positions—idle, full-dressed, under bright sunshine, in a vast crowd; but the burst of music, rushing among the arches, and ringing from the roof, wakened up the senses and the soul in a moment; and all rose by one impulse to their feet, to see the small figures that passed in procession below, and the slightest of all, on which every eye was fixed. With all the support that loyal sympathy could give, it seemed as if the sovereignty must be cruelly oppressive; for here the antique conception of British regality pervaded the entire ceremonial—a regality which had immeasurably more of power and personalty in it than is true in our day. The service, if it had not been antique in its cast, would have been shocking, with its mixing up of worship to God with homage to the sovereign, savouring of the old belief of divine right. The ancient Edward's mantle of cloth of gold looked cumbrous and oppressive, and the sceptre and orb too heavy; and it was a relief to remember that the regal power was not now what these symbols represented, and that the responsibility was lightened in proportion. Such as it remained, there was every indication this day that, under this lessened responsibility, all support would be given that the affection of the people could yield.

Soon followed events which must have made these shows—even the greatest of them—appear trivial to the sovereign. Her marriage ensued; and we find in the registers of the time, notices of Prince Albert's name being inserted, by command of the queen in council, 'in all the prayers, liturgies, and collects for the royal family;' and of the prince becoming a citizen of London in Guildhall; and next, of the registrar of the Belgrave district being summoned to Buckingham Palace, to enter on the registration-books of St. George's, Hanover Square, the birth of a royal infant. The christening ensued, but not next in order; for, the day before, Prince Albert, while skating in the presence of the queen and one lady of the court, ran some risk from the breaking of the ice. He could not have got out by himself; but the ladies kept their presence of mind, and saved him. In another year, on the 9th of November, 1841, the heir to the throne was born. Amidst the general joy and congratulations, there were

many who thought of the new-born child with pity and solicitude, feeling that it is in our days no privileged lot to be born to a throne, even in England, where the limitation of the kingly power makes the throne safer than elsewhere. In a century overclouded by the approach of a war of opinion in Europe, princes are born to a life of toil and solicitude if they are to be made equal to their station, and to real evils—for toil and solicitude are in themselves no evils—if they are not made equal to their station. But here was the great immediate blessing that the queen had a son; and all were ready to rejoice with her.

As for the state of the people, their condition had been declining almost from the beginning of this period to the end; and it was too clear that they were sinking still. The operatives were first employed half-time; then they had no work, and were known to be living upon their savings; then there were public meetings, to consider what could be done, and public subscriptions which came to an end while still no prospect opened; and then there were a thousand operatives employed on the roads in one place, and 5000, 10,000, 14,000 seemed to be merely waiting for alms or death in others. As usual, crime began to abound. The murders came in batches—horrible poisonings, combination murders, murders for purposes of theft, from the nobleman in his bed to the sawyer in his pit, abound in the chronicles of the period. New crimes arose, not bearing an immediate relation to the distress; as a vitiated atmosphere produces not only one frightful epidemic, but new or aggravated disease of other kinds. Ships were cast away, one after another, from wretches boring holes to sink them, in order to obtain the insurance. A plot for the commission of extensive forgery was matured and put in action on the continent, by a few scamps, hitherto called noblemen and gentlemen—some Scotch, some foreign—whose object was to defraud several European banks to a large amount, by forging the circular letters of credit of a London bank, and presenting the supposed letters of credit in various continental cities on the same day, or before communication could be established. The *Times* newspaper, having received early information

of the plot, ran the risk of action for libel and other consequences, in order to put the commercial world upon its guard. It succeeded in this object, was prosecuted for libel, and condemned in damages of one farthing. Its bold course, both in giving warning, and afterwards in pleading justification of the libel, won for its proprietors the public admiration and gratitude, which were expressed in the form of a handsome subscription for a testimonial. The proprietors declined the testimonial for themselves, and requested that the money might be spent for the public benefit. After two tablets, recording the facts, had been put up in the Royal Exchange and the office of the *Times*, the fund was devoted to the establishment of two scholarships, to be given to youths elected from London schools to the universities. As might be expected, the game-law murders of the period were many and shocking. In the best times, there are hungerers enough in the rural districts to make it dangerous for gentlemen to preserve game at the cost of a vast amount of human food, consumed by hares and birds before the eyes of starving men; and in a season of distress the sight is one not to be endured. We find accordingly a long list of poachings and the consequent murders; and at the same time the most effective enemy of the game-laws in their stronghold, the House of Lords, died—too soon for this as for many another good cause—Lord Suffield, who died in the summer of 1835, in his fifty-fourth year. Perhaps, if he had lived to this time, we might have been released from the game-laws, which are a disgrace to our law-books, to our practice of professing reform of abuses, and to the praise we utter in our churches of justice and mercy, and care lest we cause our brother to offend. Even these things are, however, less fearful than one manifestation of the time, which tells as much as the new practice of poisoning for the sake of payments from burial-clubs.

While the temperance cause seemed to be advancing everywhere, and tea-drinkings with speeches, and dances with music and lemonade, were noticed in newspapers, almost from day to day, certain disclosures were made at a meeting of the Westminster Medical Society in 1839, which appalled the few who heard or attended to the

information. The increase of the consumption of opium in England had led to inquiry. It was found that the abjuration of intoxicating drinks was little more than a set-off against the increased consumption of opium. The insurance offices were consulting how to defend their interests under this new peril to human life: they could guard against liability from opium-eating in future policies of insurance; but they found their capital in danger from the intemperance of persons already insured. It was not only, nor chiefly, in the insuring class of society that the practice existed. It spread far more fearfully among the hungry. In the large manufacturing towns, the druggists now employed their spare minutes throughout the week in making up penny or two-penny packets of opium for sale on Saturdays, when hundreds of poor creatures would come to receive from the long rows on the counter the packet which was to give them stupor till the miserable Monday morning.

The churches were active, as if trying all this time to heal these social woes. There was much building of new churches in London and elsewhere; and, while the desperate poor were emigrating in shoals—getting away at all hazards from the sickening scene at home—exertions were made by bishops and religious societies to provide for the endowment of bishoprics in the colonies. Much zeal was shown by the three great church societies for missionary objects, during the whole of this period, and noble sums of money were raised. But the misery and crime to be dealt with were not of a kind to be remedied by a provision for worship; and it was observable, that while the existing churches bore a very small proportion to the population of their districts, they yielded more room than was occupied. Churches come of religion; but religion does not come of churches. An obstacle to 'the operation of religion on the masses' was the intolerance of spirit which yet remained from the critical period which has been before described. The Peterborough bishop, Dr. Herbert Marsh, whose eighty-seven questions had first occasioned the open divisions in the Church, died at this time, in 1839, leaving the religious world yet heaving with the tempest, of which he furnished the first squall.

The sects within and without the Church were yet quarrelling; the Catholics were increasing in numbers, founding new institutes, and building new chapels; Protestant clergymen were not only declaring at public meetings against grants to Maynooth, but detailing every instance of superstition they met with among poor Irish and other ignorant Catholics, to excite hatred against the priests. Here and there, Dissenters were carried to prison for refusal to pay church-rates which they were assured by lawyers could not be legally levied; while a pious ship-agent—who was happily defeated in the courts—was endeavouring to make deductions from the wages of the Catholic and Presbyterian among the crew, because they objected to attend the Church service on board ship; and a clergyman here and there was refusing burial to persons baptised by lay-preachers out of the Church, or by dissenting clergy. And, as an illustration of the need there now is of provision for liberty of conscience in regard to oaths, a case occurred which did not tend to interest the poor and suffering in favour of religion, when an insolvent, a man 'of good moral character,' entitled otherwise to his discharge, was sent back to prison, and kept from working to maintain his 'starving children and unhappy wife,' because the commissioner could not administer the necessary oath to a person who, like this man, did not believe in a future life. The fault was not in the commissioner; nor yet in the man; for, if he had been capable of dishonesty, he would have professed the belief required for his enlargement. The fault was in the imposition of penalties for opinion; and it was one likely, as far as it was known, to operate in alienating the ignorant and the careless alike from the religion in whose name such things were done.

An incident was in the meantime happening which preached a softening and sanctifying lesson, uninterrupted by theological jars and social bigotry. In a light-house on the coast of Northumberland, within view of the Fern Islands, lived a family of the name of Darling. The night of the 6th of September 1838 was stormy; and the *Forfarshire* steam-boat, whose boiler was in bad order, struck on one of the Fern Islands, and parted in two.

Darling, becoming aware of the wreck, at three in the morning, desired to put off in his boat, to render assistance; and his daughter Grace, a simple-hearted girl of twenty-two, prepared, as a matter of course, to go with him. The wife and mother, seeing how stormy the sea was, opposed their purpose, and at last consented only on the condition that she might share their peril. When they were stepping into the boat, her husband represented to her that, by occupying a place in the boat, she would deprive one passenger of a chance for life, whereas by remaining at home, she might be of use in making fires, and preparing blankets, and clothes, and food for those whom he might bring. She consented, and passed an agonising hour while they were gone. By Darling's prudence, decision, and authoritative tone to the half-frantic survivors on a ledge of rock, he and his daughter accomplished the saving of nine lives. Grace thought nothing of her share in the deed, and never could understand the sensation that it caused throughout the kingdom. She always said, and truly, that there were girls all along the coast who would, and did, accompany their fathers and brothers to sea in storms, when they were called on to preserve life; and it is the noblest part of the noble lesson afforded by this event, that we are reminded of the virtue which lives and acts in quietness while the turbulent elements of human life and society are making tempests upon the surface. An event like this discloses to us occasionally the moral riches which shine in our depths; and then the fate of the unconscious revealer is something like that of Grace Darling. Her name flew abroad over the world. As she sat at her sewing in the little room in the light-house, the world came to pay her homage. The rich, the high-born, and the good, visited her. Those who could not come sent poems, or books, or money. The protection of her father was not enough under the pressure of suitors and worshippers; and the Duke of Northumberland made himself her guardian, took care of her money, kept an eye upon her lovers, and promoted, as far as he could, the quietness she longed for. But there was no more quietness for her. Her life had lost its simplicity, though her mind and manners never did. Her health gave way under the

impossibility of repose; and she died in a few years—as much a martyr to her own deed as if the boat had been swamped in its passage to the rock. Seldom has so tender a sorrow spread through the heart of the nation as when the newspapers told of the death of Grace Darling. She had found quiet, however; and a more intense image of repose can scarcely be presented than her monument, where she lies with her oar resting on her arm. That monument will preach a lesson of self-sacrifice, and rouse a spirit of heroic good-will, long after the sectarian strifes of the time shall have been forgotten.

We perceive, during this period, preparations making for the future welfare of the great mass of the nation, which are perhaps all the more hopeful for not contemplating so much as they will effect. While a terror of Socialism and Communism was spreading among the aristocracy—while there were debates in parliament upon Socialism in England, as if it were an aggression, and not a social symptom, and while thoughtful men, and those who had correspondence with the continent, were privately telling each other how Communism was spreading under the surface all through France and Germany, some of the English aristocracy were instituting an association from which more might be hoped than from perhaps any other institution whatever but a general system of education. The agricultural societies which came into action about this time may, however, be regarded as educational. While providing for the increased production of food, they provide also for the exercise of the faculties of the most ignorant and inert part of our population—the agricultural labourers. The Anti-Corn-Law League was already educating a considerable portion of the people by rousing them to thought and sound knowledge on a matter which closely concerned them, and by teaching them to apply to the management of their public interests the same qualities with which they conduct their private affairs; and now, the institution of agricultural associations promised to work in a somewhat similar manner on another portion of the people. The League disclaimed a party character altogether; and, in fact, though originated and chiefly sustained by reformers, it included

many Conservatives, and men of all shades of opinion in politics, as in everything else outside the question of a supply of food. The agricultural associations, in like manner, proscribed political subjects at their meetings. There were men of all political parties who saw that, of all branches of industry in our country, agriculture was the most backward. They saw a whole world of science, chemical and meteorological, opening, which, in its application to agriculture, might mark a new era in our social destiny. They saw that no society can long hold together in which industry fails, as with us, to obtain a sufficiency of the comforts of life; and they believed that time might be gained for the consideration of our difficulty, if the difficulty itself could not be solved, by a largely increased production of food on our own soil. They believed that there was no surplus of labour within our bounds; but rather that, if science and good management were applied to agricultural as to manufacturing processes, the hands would be found too few for the work, and each part of the work would produce a larger proportion of food. If so, such Socialists, Communists, and Chartists, as might still be bent on trying new principles and methods of society, would discuss the matter more coolly, more amiably, and much more cautiously, while feeling every year, in their state of improved welfare, that they had more to lose and less to gain by a fundamental change. Those who thus thought hailed with a very serious delight the first and second annual meetings of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, which happened during this period—the first being in 1839. Minor societies had existed for some time before. It was cheering to see, at these meetings, the Duke of Richmond and Lord Spencer walking in to dinner together, and high Tory and deep Radical chemists helping out one another's information about soils, and manures, and food for stock; and the rush to the ploughing-matches, and the stock-yards, and the implement sheds; and even the road, 'resembling the route from London to Epsom on a race-day.' 'Such societies,' as an observer remarked in a contemporary newspaper, 'supply to the farmer what mechanics' institutes have supplied to the better sort of working-men—a stimulus to inquiry, a desire for informa-

tion, and a disposition to contribute from their own experience to any topic of the day. The farmers have been long enough blamed as isolated men, as enemies of education, and as the repositories of prejudice; what is better calculated to renovate them than agricultural societies?' And if these societies should so improve the production of food as to afford to a single generation, before it is too late, the leisure of comfort to consider impartially their own condition and the prospects of their children, they will assuredly take rank among the chief blessings of the time. They may be considered as one of the results of the peace; for they originated in the improvement of chemical science, and the knowledge that a high order of agriculture existed abroad—both derived from free intercourse with the philosophers and cultivators of the continent.

By the attention given to the growth of cotton in India, a prospect of manifold good was opened—to this country, its operatives, its manufacturers, and its consumers, from our dependence on more regions than one for a supply of cotton; to the inhabitants of India, from the establishment of a new branch of production; and to the negro race, from American slavery becoming unprofitable when opposed to free labour. The East India Directors, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, some machinists, some private capitalists, and even the governor-general of India, were at this time consulting and experimenting on the growth and preparation of cotton in India, and already the mountain-roads were reported to be blackened with bullocks bringing the produce down to the coast. Much remained to be done, and much still remains to be done; but the conditions are more and more understood, and the purpose holds.

A more ambitious and direct attempt on behalf of the negro race, made at the end of this period, failed—owing to the proud and headstrong character of the benevolence which prompted it. It has never been questioned of late years that a principal method of supplanting slavery is by civilising the Africans, and making an innocent commerce more acceptable to them than the trade in slaves. A few Liverpool merchants had for some years acted on this sound view, and had established a certain amount of com-

merce on the Niger—conducting it with the caution and prudence which belong to private enterprises—sending crews of seasoned whites and trained negroes, and appearing in a commercial character alone. Most unhappily, the idea was seized by some who were ill qualified to conduct such a scheme. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton—so efficient, so successful, so thoroughly in his place in parliament—went astray in this new enterprise; and its failure broke his heart. He put in action all his great social power, and we read in the chronicles of the time of public meetings, with Prince Albert in the chair, so crowded that persons were carried out fainting; of the gratulations and mutual praises of statesmen and prelates; of grand subscriptions and yet grander hopes. Bulletins of the progress of equipment were published, and the names of officers and crews, and programmes of proceedings, and vivid descriptions of the model farm, and the other monuments of the expedition which were to arise on the banks of the Niger. All this time, the voice of warning did not cease; but those who should have been their guides in an enterprise which nobody else understood were slighted, and even insulted with insinuations that their opposition proceeded from sordid selfishness—from a fear that their trade would be interfered with. Some of them would not be driven back from their object of saving as much misery as possible of all that they foresaw from the rashness and ignorance of the scheme as planned in London; and it was a steam-boat of theirs which was hovering about the mouths of the Niger—plying up and down the river for the purpose—which saved the few survivors. The fever swept away the greater number of those who were sent forth to their death, or volunteered for it; the model farm was deserted; and, worst of all, pledges made in the name of our queen and country were necessarily left unredeemed, and remain so to this day. No one can say how far the civilisation of Africa has been set back by the spectacle of our weakness and apparent bad faith, in a region where we should have gone in assured power, or not at all. Mr. Jamieson was one of the Liverpool merchants whose warnings were loudest and truest; and his steamer it was that saved the remnant of the expedition. His information was

mainly derived from Mr. Becroft, who was familiar with the region; and it was Mr. Becroft who commanded the rescuing boat. The Niger Association did not at once dissolve. It had no more gifts of public money, and its subscriptions dwindled. When, at the meeting of 1842, Sir T. Fowell Buxton sent a letter and £50, instead of appearing, some taunts were uttered; but they were unjust. He was too ill to appear. By his Life, we learn that he strove hard for comfort in regarding the catastrophe as a mysterious dispensation, overlooking the grave faults which had made the issue anything but mysterious to others; but he could not get over the shock. He never again held up his head. And he died in 1845, in the sixtieth year of his age.

The period exhibits more than usual disaster. In 1839, we read of the christening of the *President* steam-ship, the most magnificent vessel of her kind ever seen in England. At that time 'several thousand persons' went in a day to Limehouse, to examine and admire. A year and a half afterwards, she did not return from an American voyage when expected; and nothing has ever been heard about her. For many weeks, the families of those on board were tantalised and tortured by floating rumours of her safety or of her fate; but in two months, they put on mourning, and declared that they would hope no more.—The fires that happened within these few years seem now, in the retrospect, to have been strangely destructive. In the dry season of 1835, a gipsying party who had made their tea among the underwood on Wanstead Flats, neglected to put out the fire; and the consequence was a conflagration which laid waste twenty acres of pasturage. It required the digging of a deep trench by a company of sappers and miners from Woolwich to stop the mischief at last. Two or three weeks afterwards the same misfortune happened on Clapham Common, where the villas of the neighbourhood were for some time in great danger. Two acres of brushwood and furze were in this case laid bare. In 1838, while the destruction of the houses of parliament was still fresh in men's minds, the Royal Exchange was burned down. It was night before the fire, which must have been burning for some time, was discovered; it was a bitterly cold night—the 10th of January—with a north-east wind;

and it took some time to thaw the hose of the engines when they arrived: so the flames spread and rose, illuminating the Bank, and other buildings near, till they seized upon the tower of the Exchange. The bells began to chime as stones and timber began to fall; and of all airs, the one they chimed was 'There 's nae luck about the house.' They were chiming 'God save the Queen' when one after another of the eight gave over and fell. The great city seal was found by searching among the ruins. Serious as were the consequences to the merchants of London, the loss which was most mourned was that of the old statue of Sir Thomas Gresham, which had escaped the great fire of London. Only small fragments remained of it now. The grasshopper-vane was saved, and was reserved from the sale of remains which took place three months after the fire, when various curiosities, which could not come into use for the new Exchange, were bought up at high prices. In March of the same year, happened the most mischievous fire for its extent that can be conceived. A lawyer of the Inner Temple came home from his club at two in the morning, and left a candle burning near some papers. The papers must have caught, for from that spot spread a fire which consumed a mass of deeds and other documents, some of which will be missed for centuries to come. The attorney-general suffered grievously. His library was worth 3000 guineas; but that was not the greatest part of his loss. Upwards of eighty chambers, with nearly the whole of their contents, were destroyed. In May 1840, York Minster was on fire again—by some carelessness of workmen, it was supposed. The next morning, the nave was roofless, the belfry reduced to a mere shell, and the bells lying below, having burst through the floors in their fall. At the beginning of the next year, the Old Church at Camberwell was destroyed by fire—nothing being left but the bare walls; and in a fortnight after, the princely residence of the Marquis of Londonderry —Wynyard, in Durham. The loss of pictures and antiquities was a matter of general concern. In Dundee, there was a fire which destroyed three churches; and the inhabitants, and half Scotland, mourned over the wreck of its old cathedral. In June, Astley's Amphitheatre was

burned down. As no one was aware that a life was lost—a servant-girl having perished—the interest of the spectators was about the saving of the stud—Ducrow's famous stud. The horses were bent upon going into the ring, as usual; and it required no little gallantry and skill to save as many of them as escaped. The loss cost poor Ducrow his reason and his life.

Some less fatal shows offered themselves meanwhile. There was a passion for balloons; and in November 1836, three gentlemen enjoyed a glorious flight, from London to a village in Nassau—480 miles in 17 hours. The passage over the dark sea, and the Belgian district of furnaces—the sea of mist below in the morning, with the rustling of forests coming up like the sound of waves on the beach, the paling of the stars, and the gorgeous sunrise shedding its colours over the vast heavens, and the earth retired below, are described as inexpressibly solemn and beautiful. The next year, a foolish attempt to descend by a parachute from a balloon ended fatally; and the year after, a more scientific attempt succeeded—the voyager floating downwards for thirteen minutes after cutting the single cord that suspended him from the balloon.

There was a grand spectacle on the Thames, almost from end to end, in 1838, when the lord mayor, as conservator of the Thames, explored its course and condition in state-barges. The agitation against the defilement of the Thames by the filth of London had not then begun; and the processions, and gratulations, and strewing of flowers, and feastings, belonging to 'the business of the conservancy of the Thames,' went on through six days, as if the Thames were really preserved in good order. The civic ideas of this duty will probably have changed, before the next pageant of the kind is seen at Henley.—A piece of aristocratic pastime, 'which had been two years in preparation,' took place at Eglinton Castle, in August 1839, under the name of the Eglinton tournament. It was an imitation of the ancient tournaments; and no expense was spared to make it as like as possible to the old shows of arms. But such attempts never fully succeed—never succeed in being more than child's play, like the 'dressing up' in the nursery—except in virtue of being a regularly

perpetuated custom. The real antiquity which resides in such custom renders venerable the appearance of the champion at the coronation; and even endeared the grotesque devices and corporation practices which lasted in English towns till the Municipal Bill swept them all away. But in the Eglinton fête there was no such sanction; and, in spite of the host's expenditure of £40,000, the crowds who came—some from a distance of 400 miles—the personal charms of the queen of beauty, the valour and skill of the jousting knights, and the desire of every one to be pleased, there seems to have been a universal sense of failure. The weather was bad, and 'the feudal appearance of the display was sadly marred by thousands of umbrellas; . . . . the queen of beauty and her ladies, instead of mounting their palfreys, were confined within their carriages.' If ever mailed knight swore at the envious clouds, it must have been the young Earl of Eglinton on these critical days.—A more genuine piece of antiquity was presented in the case of an inquest held in Ireland on a body found in a bog. The bones powdered under the touch, while the muscles were so hard that the body bore the weight of a man, and substances rebounded from striking the limbs. Our mummy, it is true, could reckon only 100 years to every 1000 of an Egyptian; but there was something affecting in its being on our own ground, and yet more in an inquest being held on a being so mysterious, of whose ways and thoughts, and goings and comings, no man could tell anything. There was a tradition of a suicide having been buried thereabouts, some hundreds of years before; but no one could say whether this were he.

If the Eglinton tournament was not regarded with popular respect, much less was the other lordly show of this period—the trial of Lord Cardigan, for duelling offences, in the House of Lords. There is little in the affair that any one would wish to dwell upon, or that needs be dwelt upon; though a cursory notice is necessary. Lord Cardigan, formerly Lord Brudenell, was from time to time coming before the public as the aggressor in some quarrel—the public seeing that his antagonists in these quarrels were usually mild and gentlemanly men, of rank

lower than his own in life and in the service. He was known to have connections at court, and interest at the Horse Guards; and no one could avoid the conviction, that for these reasons, an amount of social misbehaviour was passed over in him which would have immediately ruined almost every other officer in the army. After sundry adventures with his officers, in which their pride was wounded, their feelings exasperated, and their prospects ruined, by mess-room quarrels, tyranny on parade, and courts-martial, now on himself and now on an antagonist, Lord Cardigan fought a duel with a Captain Harvey Tuckett, and wounded him. As he was arrested, there was no choice but to try him; and he was tried by his peers amidst a parade and expense of which, according to universal opinion, the occasion was not worthy. Every one knew that Lord Cardigan would come off safe—duelling being regarded as it still is in our country, and Lord Cardigan's interest having already borne him safely through worse perils; but no one could have anticipated such an audacious evasion of justice as actually took place. It was admitted that certain parts of the evidence related to Captain Harvey Tuckett, and that the person in court called by that name was rightly so called; but whether the one and the other was the same Captain Harvey Tuckett was professed to be doubtful, and supposed to be purposely left so. And thus the prosecution fell to the ground. It was not without its results, however. The mockery of justice, the lavish expenditure which thus became an insult to the nation, and the additional presumption now afforded that Lord Cardigan could not be thrown off by society, however he might oppress it, all went to deteriorate the position of the peers in respect of the people, and turned the grand antique show of the trial into a very coarse modern offence. The Duke of Cleveland's reply was not forgotten, when instead of using the established form, 'Not guilty, upon my honour,' he said, 'Not guilty, *legally*, upon my honour.' Its significance was appreciated, though it did not go so far as the popular sentiment.

If any country-cousin of the next generation should observe that the summit of the London Monument does not correspond with the old pictures of it, he may learn that

the grating, which by no means adorns the pillar, was put on in 1839, in consequence of two suicides having taken place in that year, within a few weeks of each other —a young girl first, and then a boy of fifteen, having thrown themselves over. As fantastic suicides have an infectious character, it was suggested by some persons on the first occasion to obviate the possibility of another such act; and after the second suicide, no time was lost in making all safe.

Since the establishment of steam-transit in the eastern seas, great attention had been devoted to the improvement of India mail communication. Many experiments of different routes were proposed, and some tried. Among others, there was an exploratory expedition to survey the Euphrates, in the hope that steamers might carry the mails by that river as far as Beles, 100 miles from Antioch, whence the way would be clear and easy enough. Two steamers were sent out in frame from Liverpool, with all needful materials and stores, and a picked company of officers and men; the whole being conveyed by the *George Canning* to the coast of Syria. All went well; the vessels in frame were transhipped and carried in boats up the Orontes, and then over the desert, and then put together and floated on the Euphrates; and the river itself had been to some extent explored, when a tremendous hurricane capsized one of the vessels—the *Tigris*—drowning fifteen of her men, and some natives. The survivors returned, impressed with the importance of establishing a free communication in those regions, by means of the great rivers, both for the transmission of the mails, and the opening of a profitable trade. They did not foresee how soon European travellers would be stumbling upon old Nineveh, and laying open treasures of antiquity, in whose presence people would forget that they came to see about India mails and the introduction of commerce. In 1840, the India papers told some striking facts about the consequences of improved communication with home, by steam or otherwise. Within five years, the number of letters had doubled, though the inland rate of postage was still very high. The largest proportion of letters had before been sent through Calcutta; now Bombay

was the letter-depôt; but the decrease at Calcutta was only 33 per cent., while the increase at Bombay was 500 per cent.

These changes may appear small in comparison with the improvements that have taken place since; but their importance was inestimable. If our route had been for ever by the Cape, the prospects of India—of the raising of the condition of the millions of her natives—would have been far inferior to what they are now; and on the elevation of those Indian millions—on the development of their free labour by their social progression, the fate of Africa and much of America appears to depend. It has been said before, but it can hardly be said too often, that the abolition of negro slavery everywhere, and the civilisation of Africa, depend, to all appearance, on the kindly development of the resources of India.

Among the scientific facts put forward during this period, there is one which must obtain emphatic notice, whenever and wherever it might occur. For a long time some men eminent in science had occasionally avowed that they found great difficulty in refusing evidence of the production of animal life by chemical agencies. It was no new thing for men who knew what they were saying to declare a belief that animalcules were absolutely originated without any parents, in both liquids and solids, under certain conditions. In 1836, a philosopher was startled by an appearance which compelled attention to the inquiry whether such things could be. Mr. Crosse, whose name has been given to the acarus produced under the conditions detailed by him at a meeting of the British Scientific Association, 'was looking for silicious formations when animal matter appeared instead.' In the midst of elements fatal to animal life under the surface of a caustic fluid, within an enclosure from which the atmosphere had been driven out, and where there was no possibility that ova could have been deposited, or could have escaped destruction if deposited, insects appeared, after an electric current had been established for a sufficient number of months. Without the electricity, and without some other conditions, the insects have failed to appear. With those conditions, they have been produced again and again from

that day to the present. If allowed to remain in the enclosure, they perish. If let out as soon as they appear, they feed, reproduce their kind, and live till the first frost, which is always fatal to them. At a lecture at the Royal Institution, in 1837, Mr. Faraday recommended the closest attention to the facts stated by Mr. Crosse, similar appearances having presented themselves to him, in the course of his electrical experiments; but he left it doubtful whether it was a case of production or revivification. This all-important point was investigated by Mr. Weekes, of Sandwich, and again and again by Mr. Crosse, who is prepared with evidence regarding the formation of these animals, which cannot but command the attention of men of science, whenever they shall have left off attributing to him theories which he disavows, and opinions and sentiments which he never entertained. When the contempt and prejudice with which great discoveries are always received shall have subsided, it will be admitted that Mr. Crosse has merely made known, in the simplest manner, appearances which presented themselves to him, propounding no theory, drawing no inferences, and attacking no established belief. While, for thirteen years, too many who might have tested his assertions have been merely expressing contempt of them, he and one or two more have been diversifying their experiments as much as they could, and found themselves occasionally rewarded by the appearance of acari. Mr. Weekes baked the frame of his apparatus in a powerful heat, distilled the water, excluded the atmosphere by fumes constantly rising in a bell-glass, and subjected the silicate employed to a white heat. Under these safeguards against the previous existence of animal life he saw the liquid in his vessel grow turbid; he saw the gelatinous matter collect round the negative wire of his battery which was immersed in the fluid; and he next saw one of the new insects emerge from the gelatine and run off to a corner of the apparatus. Under the same electrical conditions Mr. Weekes employed different substances on account of one containing more carbon than another; and he then found as he had ventured to hope that more insects were produced when there was more carbon, and fewer when there was less.

Mr. Crosse has persevered in his experiments,* and has detected the formation of the acarus from the first appearance of a minute white speck, through its gradual enlargement, till it puts forth the little waving lines which are to become legs, through its first indications of life, and its growth to that maturity which enables it to leave its birthplace, shift for itself, and propagate its kind. In connection with this he has assured himself of the significant fact of the similarity of the first stages of the production of acari and of certain mineral crystallisations electrically produced. He finds the appearances of the white speck the same through the processes of enlargement and of putting out lateral filaments; but then, according to diversities of treatment, these filaments become, in the case of the mineral, rigid, shining, transparent, six-sided prisms, and in that of the animal, limbs of a body endowed with vitality. These are results too serious and significant to be treated with either levity or anger; yet have they been received with too much of both. The objections made have been mostly of the *a priori* sort; and it is needless to say that they cannot withstand the evidence of experiment. Mr. Crosse's invitation to the scientific part of society is to join him in ascertaining, by every possible variety and patience of experiment, what is the truth of the matter; and, till this is done, his information remains the best that can be had on a subject of unbounded philosophical significance. As such, its first proposal for attestation is an incident worthy of special notice in a history of the time.

Several men of science died during this period. First, Captain Kater, who had borne an important part in the trigonometrical survey of India, and had lost his health in the work. After his return, he earned, by many scientific services, his admission into almost all the learned societies in Europe, and died in 1835, aged fifty-eight.—The greatest of mathematical and astronomical instrument-makers, Edward Troughton, died in the same year, possessed of the gratitude of the first philosophers of his

* The following statements, which are but a small portion of a most interesting exposition, are given, by permission, from a letter of Mr. Crosse to the author, bearing date August 1849.

age, who could not have effected their discoveries without the aid of his wonderful instruments.—Pond, the astronomer, died in 1836.—In 1838, Dr. Olinthus Gregory, professor of mathematics at Woolwich, was compelled to resign his chair—his health being destroyed by excessive study; and he died in 1841. He was known throughout the world of science by many publications; and he had the honour of being one of the twelve founders of the Astronomical Society of London.—In 1836, died Mr. M'Adam, the reformer of roads, whose name was familiar to every ear in England till railways extinguished all interest in every other kind of road. Mr. M'Adam was a striking instance of the mental activity which is always ready to respond to opportunity. There have been many county magistrates and trustees of roads in our time; yet no one but Mr. M'Adam was effectually impressed by the want of scientific principles shown in the construction of roads. Once so impressed, this Ayrshire magistrate devoted his mind to the subject, and in his sixtieth year gave forth his plan, which was in use almost all over the country before his death, in his eighty-first year.—Two great surgeons died in 1840 and 1841—Sir Anthony Carlisle, and Sir Astley P. Cooper. Sir A. Carlisle introduced some new surgical instruments of great value; he laboured usefully in the field of comparative anatomy, aided by the sympathy and knowledge of his friend, Sir Joseph Banks; and he was the best friend and supporter of the Westminster Hospital, of which he was senior surgeon when he died, at the age of seventy-two.—Sir Astley P. Cooper's face and figure are familiar to all, through Sir Thomas Lawrence's fine portrait of him; and his was a face not to be forgotten when once seen. It indicated the power of intellect and kindness of heart which made him the greatest and most popular surgeon of his time. Great as was his fame as an operator, he perhaps did more good by his professional writings. When loaded with honours, rich, and growing old, he retired to the country, in pursuit of repose; but it would not do: he wanted some interests more stirring than those afforded by his library; and returned to London and to practice. He was still busy when death overtook him in his seventy-third year.

When, in middle life, he removed from the city to the west end of London, his income was the largest ever heard of in the profession—£21,000 a year. George IV. made him a baronet at his coronation, in 1821.

James Weddell, who in 1825 reached the highest latitude known in the South Polar regions, died in ten years after his great feat, aged only forty-six.—A North Polar wanderer perished miserably in 1840, at a yet earlier age. Mr. Simpson, an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, added many items to our knowledge of the polar coast of North America. He was returning from one of his expeditions when, as is supposed, his reason was overthrown by anxiety and fatigue, and he destroyed himself, after having shot two of his companions. If he had lived, there is every probability that he would have effected more in completing the discovery of a North-west Passage than any other man; and an appointment was on the way to him which would have afforded him every facility. His loss is one of the most painful in the list of polar discoverers who have died in the search.—Captain Gerard, the India surveyor and scientific traveller, returned home, as such men do, with health much impaired; but he had wonderful things to tell of the untrodden passes and inaccessible heights of the Himalayas—many of which, however, he had contrived to explore, looking into Tibet on the one hand, and British India on the other. He resided for some years in Chinese Tartary, while engaged in surveying; and he obtained large information about the tribes, whose race and ways it is highly important to us to understand. But Captain Gerard did not tell us so much as he might have done of his eastern experiences, though it is understood that he left a store of manuscript materials behind him. He died in 1839.—Another African traveller perished in the attempt to reach Timbuctoo, during this period—Davidson, who had made exploratory journeys in all the four quarters of the world, and desired to crown his enterprises with a feat more difficult than any he had yet accomplished. He had measured the pyramids both of Egypt and of Yucatan, and could instruct painters in their painting of panoramas of Madras, Thebes, Jerusalem, and Mexico; but he had further set his mind upon reporting

of Timbuctoo. He was murdered by Arabs when about twenty-five days' journey from his object. He is remembered in London by his lectures at the Royal Institution on Egypt and Palestine.—The traveller on the Lebanon sometimes turns aside to visit a desolate grave in a garden, eight miles from Sidon—the grave of Lady Hester Stanhope, commonly called 'the eccentric.' She was a niece of William Pitt, and lived in his house for some years; but the greater part of her life was spent in the east, where she went in a spirit of pride, where she gained at first wonderful influence by her imposing pride, and whence she had too much pride to return, after she had discovered the hollowness of her authority. In an age of improved science, hers would have been a less unhappy lot than it was. It appears that her case was one of those, now known to be far from rare, where those faculties operate naturally which are usually put in action by animal magnetism. She and her adherents knew nothing about this, and she had just enough power of insight and foresight to suggest some idea of her being inspired, and to keep herself and her servants in a constant and painful state of doubt whether she was inspired or not. She saw and knew some things which others could not see or know; she had curious glimpses of prescience; but she could not depend upon her powers, nor always separate—any more than others of her class—realities from mere dreams. So, some called her a prophetess, and others called her mad, and others believed her merely ill-humoured. She did not know herself what she was, except that, as must be feared, she was helpless and miserable. She passed her latter years in seclusion, in a house she had built on one of the spurs of Lebanon—distrusting her neighbours and servants, partly feared and partly disliked by them, and deserted when sick and dying. An interest attaches to her from the contrast of her early and later life, from the adventures she had gone through, as a kind of chieftainess of the Arabs, and from the peculiarities of her powers and temper—an interest which she did not win through the affections. But there was a sense of relief when her death was announced in England—a sense of comfort that that restless and mysterious mind was asleep, and past the

power of annoyance from without and misgiving from within.—Sir Sidney Smith's name is associated with the east in most men's minds, from his command having lain repeatedly in the Mediterranean, from his operations in Egypt, and from his great feat of saving Acre when Napoleon marched into Syria. He was a great man in his profession—the first in fame of living British admirals at the time of his death; but there are some who remember him for something else than this—for his attempt to obtain from the Vienna Congress, in 1814, the abolition of the slave-trade, and the disarming of the piratical states of Barbary. He died at Paris, in his seventy-seventh year, in May 1840.

If we look at the political department of society, we shall see that Death grouped his victims strangely at this time.

Some were as usual called away who appeared to belong wholly to a former period. The Princess Augusta died in 1840, in the same year with her brother's favourite, Beau Brummell, who had once made such a noise in the world, but who died abroad, destitute and drivelling—another added to the long list of warnings of the fate of court favourites. This was an extreme case—both the sovereign and the favourite being steeped in the vulgarity which belongs to frivolity and sensualism in an age of enlightenment and a post of high duty. But, vulgar as were the pair, the one did make the other the fashion, and the author of fashion, and then cast him off; or, as some say, compelled Beau Brummell to cast him off. The favourite's last triumph was 'cutting the prince.' Having done this, he retired to insignificance and poverty, sinking gradually into idiotcy and death. When his death was announced in England, people turned their eyes towards the court as it is now, with its centre and heart of simple domestic life, and were glad that the old court dandies were gone, and that the national offence and disgrace of court dandyism was buried with them.—Another favourite of the same prince—his wife, as she was considered by all who looked at the matter in any other light than that of the Royal Marriage Act—Mrs. Fitzherbert, went too, at the age of eighty. She was married to the prince by the

rites of the Catholic Church; and she was regarded with entire respect by the royal family, and therefore by the rest of society, till the day of her death. It must have been with a strange mixture of painful feelings that she watched from her retirement the fortunes of her husband, in his marriage, his conjugal discontents, and his fatal error in bringing his queen to trial. When she had watched them both to their graves, her own early life must have appeared like a former state of existence.

After the idols of power went those of wealth. The richest man and the richest woman in the world died in 1836 and 1837—Mr. Rothschild and the Duchess of St. Alban's. Mr. Rothschild, 'the greatest millionaire of the present or probably any other age,' met with no more homage than might fairly be his due. He obtained his wealth by the exercise of faculties respectable in their way; the political power he held was a *quid pro quo*—a natural exchange for financial services; and he spent his money generously and with discrimination. Such deference as waited upon him he might naturally have enjoyed in any other period of society in which he could have gained his wealth by commerce and lent it to government. It was in the other case that the offensive and humbling English worship of wealth was most broadly exhibited. The Duchess of St. Alban's would never have been noticed in society but for her wealth. Her early life, when she was a third-rate actress and in no way distinguished by beauty, talents, or conduct, would have prevented her being heard of if she had not, by marrying a rich banker, become the wealthiest woman of her time. She next married a foolish young peer. His rank gave her no dignity, and her wealth could bring upon him nothing but contempt; yet do the newspapers of the time record all the proceedings of the pair, and the nobles of the land competed for the privilege of their visits. There was much hollowness in it. We know by some things that passed at Abbotsford that the duchess was made to feel that she was ridiculed and despised; but this makes the mammon-worship more, and not less offensive, by showing that the worship itself was thought a fitting subject for hypocrisy. This woman—for though a duchess, she could

not be called a lady—had qualities which might have made herself and others happy under more favourable circumstances. She was truly good-natured, and had abundance of energy. Her munificence when she was wealthy was made honourable and trustworthy by the fact, that when she was a very poor actress she had shared all she had with those who were in yet greater need. She had made cheap baby-linen with her own hands to lend because she could not afford to give. This early beneficence communicated its grace to that of an after-time when, having given away in every direction that could be thought of, she still laid by £40,000 a year.

One pair of friends who went nearly together were the old Whig comrades, the Duke of Bedford and Lord Holland. The Duke of Bedford did great good by his liberal encouragement of art and the arts; and his memory will be preserved by the Bedford drainage, the rebuilding of Covent Garden Market and Woburn Church tower, and the sculpture-gallery at Woburn Abbey; but a far higher respect attends upon his surrender of borough property and influence, by his promotion of parliamentary reform. —Lord Holland was the most accomplished of the Whig politicians of his time. None of them understood the principles of reform, or could conceive of fully carrying out as much as they knew; and he was of the number of halting reformers. But he was, of all the statesmen of his time, the most distinguished vindicator of religious liberty. He had self-knowlege enough to be aware that even on this, his strongest point, he needed instruction and guidance; and he sought them; and when his grasp of any principle was once fixed, it was an unrelaxing one. On every occasion on which the rights of religious opinion came into question, his vote and his testimony are found on the side of equal liberty; and when he could do no more, he recorded protests which are worthy of study for their clearness, temperance, and conclusiveness. He was in his sixty-seventh year when he died, and the Duke of Bedford in his seventy-fourth.—The Marquis Camden died a few days before Lord Holland—revered for an act as patriotic as the Duke of Bedford's surrender of borough property. Lord Camden filled several state-offices respectably; but

all his other honours pale before that of his having surrendered emoluments from a sinecure office to the amount of a quarter of a million. There are, doubtless, many men in England capable of a sacrifice like this, and of making it with the grace of quietness and simplicity, as Lord Camden did; but those men are not ordinarily found in the class of aristocratic politicians. To aristocratic politicians it usually appears a matter of course that offices and emoluments exist for their acceptance and benefit. To Lord Camden it appeared that, whatever others might do, he could not feel easy to receive emoluments from the office of teller of the exchequer, without doing any work; and he paid the proceeds into the treasury for a long course of years.

Two restless men—Henry Hunt and William Cobbett—would henceforth agitate no more. They died in 1835, and the world was the quieter for their departure. It is usual to mention them together, because they pursued the same calling of political agitation at the same time; but there was little resemblance in the men. Hunt had not Cobbett's ability; he had not either Cobbett's clearness of thought, or weight of matter, or power of delivery. Hunt was a mere demagogue; Cobbett was that, and a man of genius too. As for the integrity, and disinterestedness, and truthfulness of either of them, there is nothing to be said. They were undisguised self-seekers in the midst of their complaints on behalf of the human race, and ostentatiously violent and exaggerated in their statements. The difference is, that Hunt gave us nothing more, while Cobbett gave us clear views on many things, strong stimulus to thought and action, and endless amusement, if the painful sense of his untrustworthiness left any power of enjoying it. Hunt was sixty-two at the time of his death; and Cobbett seventy-three.—One of Hunt's victims, Watson the elder, died in America soon afterwards. He was a weak man, who would never have gone into the Spa-fields riot, nor any other, but for Hunt's seduction; and he seems to have had no more power than inclination to lead others astray, except under such instigation. After his acquittal at the treason trials of 1817, he attended Hunt's meetings in a quiet way, till the disclosure of the

Cato-Street conspiracy, when he went to America—not because he was at all implicated in that plot, but because he probably had had enough of unavailing sedition.—With one more name we seem to dismiss the period of sedition, as connected with the spy-system. Sedition we have, and shall have, while the great labour and food question remains unsolved; but if the ferocity on the one side remains, the cruel meanness on the other—the employment of government spies, who must always be tempted to create the treason by which they are to profit—does seem to be over. Unless we are yet to be depraved and rebarbarised by a long war, it is not to be supposed that a spy-system can ever again be dreamed of by any minister, because it would not be for a moment tolerated by the nation. Reynolds, the United Irishman, who betrayed the Dublin conspirators of 1798, died at Paris in 1836.—One survived him who could look back a good deal further, to a time of yet more fearful commotion—a ploughman who was ploughing a field at Culloden when the Pretender marched by to the battle. When Robertson saw Prince Charlie, he must have been twenty years old, as he was 114 at the time of his death in 1839.—By his side, old Lady Cork, who died the next year, must have appeared young and sprightly. She was 'the lively Miss Monckton' whom we read of in Boswell's Life of Johnson; and lively she was to the end.—It was time now that we were letting the last century go. While younger men were passing away, leaving, however, finished works for their monuments, some of the busy men of the last century had lingered till now; and they were dropping off at last. Among the younger men who were yet, however, far from youthful, were Sir Robert Grant, twin-brother of Lord Glenelg, who, after some useful service at home, became governor of Bombay, and died there in 1838; and Lord William Bentinck, who was governor-general of India for ten years, and did much for the civilisation of the natives, by the discouragement of the suttee, and infanticide, and other barbarisms; and Sir Wilmot Horton, who made some improvements in colonial administration while governor of Ceylon; and Lord Henley, who was the first in the field of church reform in the crisis of 1832; and Mr. Barber

Beaumont, who in 1806 established the first savings-bank, from which—then called the Provident Institution—the whole savings-bank system has arisen. Of the aged, the remains of the last century, two passed away, with whom seemed to be buried the very life of their time; and also Sir John Soane, who, as architect, built the Bank and the College of Surgeons; and as patriot, left his art-collection to the nation—the gift being confirmed by act of parliament. The two eminent above all these, old or young, were the fortunate brothers Lord Stowell and Lord Eldon.

These fortunate and united, and yet not happy brothers, were sons of a Newcastle tradesman, of the name of Scott. They were destined to find and appropriate all that life could give of advancement, professional honours, enormous wealth, and influence proportioned to their powers and success together; and they were destined to find that these things do not make men happy. A more impressive revelation can hardly be presented than in the life of Lord Eldon, of the suffering of a narrow and timid mind, with a presumptuous and jealous temper. An experience of this kind is no surprise in the absence of such remarkable intellectual ability, and such decent morals, as distinguished these brothers. The impressiveness of the lesson consists in the evidence given of the insufficiency of these things for wisdom and peace, when comprehensiveness of views, liberality of principles, and generosity of temper are absent. Once introduced in London, William, the elder, then Dr. Scott, carried all before him in his profession. He was called to the bar in 1780, and in ten years held, or had passed through, half-a-dozen high legal offices.

In the Commons, he was a valued government member; and he was to have been raised to the peerage in 1805, but some intrigue came in the way, and kept him a commoner for another sixteen years. He had been made judge of the High Court of Admiralty in 1798; and he remained on the bench thirty years. His only son died two months before him; but the old man was beyond the reach of any other affliction than his own imbecility. He was ninety when he died in 1836. He had had many good things in life, and tasted of intellectual pleasure in a high degree; but there is no evidence of his having even conceived of

the loftier satisfactions which are the gift of faith, hope, and charity. Like his brother, whom he brought into his own path of the law, he had no conception of human progress—no hope but of keeping things as they were, a hope which every day of his later life disappointed—and none of that enlarged charity which is unsuspicious of evil, and forgetful of self. Of professional success, Lord Stowell deserved all that he obtained. He is considered the highest English authority in the departments of ecclesiastical law and the law of nations. His expositions of intricate questions of large compass were so luminous and complete, as to give to his statements the character of revelations of the law, and to his judgments the dignity of oracles. He appears not to have been troubled with his younger brother's infirmity of indecision; and when excuse is made for Lord Eldon's delays of justice on the ground of the comprehensiveness of his views, Lord Stowell's example may be quoted in proof that sagacity and largeness of view may be combined with decision and efficiency.

As for Lord Eldon's delays, there is no doubt that they were made the most of by political opponents, by the sufferers under those delays, and by popular rumour, which sprang from these sources. There is no doubt, also, that Lord Eldon was right in his allegations, and correct in his proofs—that by means of his long and cautious study and deliberation, estates had been preserved or restored to their right owners, which would have been given to the wrong party by a more hasty judge, on a more superficial review of the case. But it is also impossible to deny that there was a large overbalance of evil on the other side—a vast destruction of property, and infliction of misery, from the protraction of chancery suits, and an engendering of a contempt and dislike of the law far more revolutionary than any of the acts of reform which Lord Eldon held in such painful dread. There can be no doubt to those who read his Life, that the action of his mind was much impeded and deranged by his self-regards—his cowardly anxiety about other people's opinions of him, his jealousy of his friends, and his fears of his enemies; while his insolent misjudgment of the people at large was perpetually throwing him out in the exercise of his judgment. His legal learning

was never surpassed, if it was ever equalled; and his judgments may be all the more valuable for being so long waited for. Such benefits as he left behind him in this form are no more than a compensation for the mischief he did in his political capacity. Throughout a long life, he was the great obstructive—the grand impediment in the way of improvement—the heavy drag upon social happiness in the country which he professed to love so well. It was a national misfortune that political power should rest in the hands of one whose mind was so narrow, whose temper was at once timid and insolent, and whose heart, if ever he had one, had wasted and withered early in life. He was always fumbling for his heart and his conscience, as if to make sure that they were safe; and he chuckled over them as a miser over the gold pieces he can jingle in his fob; but the more he chuckled over his hoarded heart and conscience, the less use they were of to anybody else, till at last the world doubted whether he had either. The memoirs of his life present him as the prince of egotists; and as he had lived the life, he died the death of the egotist. As he more and more viewed all things in their relation to his personal complacency, and as the world did not slacken its course as age and infirmity withdrew him from its activity, he suffered more and more from jealousy and discontent. There was less of his graceful playfulness, and more of watchfulness, fewer jokes, and more suspicions and pets, till even his vigilant life could keep awake no longer; and he had to leave his fields and his woods, and the fame and authority he had so long and tenaciously vindicated, and content himself with those deserts which he estimated so highly, and those pleasures of conscience which he had incessantly spoken of as of a kind of special grant from Providence to himself. When he was gone, the nation anxiously acquitted itself of its obligations to him; the kingdom echoed with acknowledgments of his ability and learning, and praise of his political consistency; his pale face and feeble form were missed in the House of Lords, and in the law-courts his name was ushered in with compliments; but there is no doubt that, if it had been possible, everybody would have been as sorry to see him back again as to witness a revival of the

times of which he was the animating spirit. The posthumous homage was not hypocritical; it sprang from the uneasy desire to do justice all the more conscientiously, because the heart gives no help. Lord Eldon died in January 1838, in the eighty-seventh year of his age.—His old comrade, Lord Sidmouth, was almost as old—past eighty when Lord Eldon died. He was gradually declining in health, though not in clearness of mind. He was always an amiable man, even when spending his days in setting traps for conspirators, and hunting traitors. He did those things as an indubitable professional duty. When he had done, he enjoyed a serene conscience, free from misgivings as to his dealings with the ignorant, the hungering, and the exasperated. His business was with the throne, and not with the people. He thought his successors unaccountably rash and supine in ceasing to coerce the people, and therein to guard the throne; but he had done with business, and it was their affair. So he resigned himself gently to infirmity and decline, looked upon Lord Eldon's departure as a reminder that he must soon follow; and died, when he had reached Lord Eldon's age, in February 1844—twenty years after his retirement from official life.

Zachary Macaulay died during the period under review, one of the most strenuous labourers of the friendly company who toiled so hard for the abolition of slavery; and his and Wilberforce's friend, Mr. Simeon, the originator of the Evangelical movement at Cambridge, by which so much was done in the way of the purchase of advowsons, to fill the pulpits of the Establishment with men who should revive the spirit of religion in the lukewarm Church. Mr. Simeon held the same living at Cambridge for fifty-three years; and saw before his death, in his seventy-eighth year, such a revival in the Church as he had little anticipated; a revival—partly incited by his own—of the High-Church spirit which has always hitherto been found incompatible with human liberty, and hostile to peace on earth, and good-will to men. At Mr. Simeon's funeral, 2000 mourners followed the coffin, and his departure was regarded by his adherents almost as that of an apostle.—Joseph Lancaster, who invented and tried the method of

mutual instruction in schools before Dr. Bell—though the system is usually named after Dr. Bell—died by an accident in the year 1838; being run over in the streets of New York. Both men should have the credit, such as it is, of the system, which they appeared to have invented independently. From the musical world we lost at this time, in 1837, Stevens, whose glees are sung everywhere, from concerts at Windsor to little gatherings in workshops and water-parties; and in the same year, another of the Wesleys, now fast dropping away from us.—Samuel Wesley, nephew of John, and brother to the musical genius Charles, had the true Wesley organisation, disposing him to a life of piety expressed in music. It was this nephew of whom John Wesley said, when it was believed that popish music had made him a Catholic: 'He may indeed roll a few years in purging fire, but he will surely go to heaven at last.' His life on earth was a purgatory. His head was injured by a fall in his early manhood, and from that time he was subject to long visitations of religious melancholy. Music was his solace; and he has left some which may beguile others of the sorrow of which he knew so much.—Thomas Attwood, Mozart's pupil, died in 1838, leaving two coronation anthems, and a mass of other compositions by which to be commemorated. He was organist of St. Paul's for many years; and afterwards, for a short time before his death, organist of the Chapels Royal. He was chorister of the Chapel Royal, when his ability drew the attention of the Prince of Wales, who bore the expense of his musical education on the continent, in the course of which he formed his intimacy with Mozart.

Wilkins, the architect, who built the University Clubhouse, St. George's Hospital, and the National Gallery, in London, and collegiate buildings at Cambridge and Haileybury, died in 1839; and in the next year, Sir Jeffrey Wyatville, whose father and two uncles were architects of the name of Wyatt. The change of name was a device of George IV., to distinguish his favourite from his uncles. The renovation and improvement of Windsor Castle are his great deed, and that with which his name will ever be associated; but he left works also in thirty-five out of the forty English counties, and four out of the twelve

Welsh. Though much might be said of these if Windsor Castle was out of sight, they are almost lost in the presence of that noble achievement, which is justly a cause of pride to the nation. The architect reached his seventy-fourth year. His likeness remains, not only in Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait, but in a bust in the long gallery at Windsor, where he, if any man, deserves a place.

William Holl, the historical and portrait engraver, died in 1838; and Bewick's apprentice, Nesbitt, whose wood-engravings did ample honour to his master—Hilton, who succeeded Fuseli in the charge of the Royal Academy, and who was eminently beloved and respected by the pupils there, died in 1839.—And in the same year, Turnerelli, the sculptor, who gave us the celebrated figure of Burns at his plough, for the poet's monument at Dumfries.—And we lost Daniell, to whom the untravelled owe so much of their conception of Indian scenery; and Stuart Newton, who brought his talent from his home in Nova Scotia, and cultivated it in Italy, and was rapidly maturing it in London, when insanity overtook him, and broke up all the purposes of his life, and at length his life also. He recovered his reason when his strength was too far gone to admit of his rallying. He was in his fortieth year.—Westall, second only to Stothard in fame and employment as an illustrator of books, died in 1837; and in 1839, Sir W. Beechey, who was old enough to have been the favourite portrait-painter of George III. and his queen, and to have enjoyed a great range of aristocratic practice before the uprising of Sir Thomas Lawrence.—Another aged artist died, in 1840—Alexander Nasmyth, the father of the Scottish school of landscape-painting. Besides his landscapes, however, he has given us something of great value, in his portrait of his friend Burns, of whom we should otherwise have no good picture.—His countryman, David Wilkie, died, too soon, in the same year. It may be that we had had the best of Wilkie, and that no new style that he could ever attempt could yield such results as that which he had forsaken—that of his best years, and by which he is best known; but still his death at fifty-six, on his return-voyage from the east, when his mind was full of ideas and images of which we were to have had the

benefit, was felt to be a national misfortune; and the mourning, within and without the world of art, was widespread and sincere. The groups round print-shop windows, in all the towns of the kingdom, proved that it was not necessary to belong to the world of art to enjoy Wilkie's pictures. His 'Village Politicians,' his 'Rent-day,' his 'Cut Finger,' and 'Rabbit on the Wall,' his 'Reading of the Will,' and many others, are as well known to hundreds of errand-boys, and homely tradesmen, and persons who were school-children in his best time, as to the owners of the pictures themselves. Wilkie was the son of an humble Scotch clergyman. He had travelled in the east during the year before his death—sank suddenly under a feverish attack, after leaving Gibraltar, on his return, and was buried at sea.

Of the actors who were favourites in the last century there were few remaining now; and death was fast making them fewer. Blanchard died in 1835; and in the next year, Jack Bannister, of whom Garrick predicted great things as a painter, but who changed his style of art from motives of filial duty, and became an actor—not thereby losing Garrick's friendship, but gaining instruction from him. There was much regret among playgoers when Jack Bannister took leave of the stage in 1815; and some of this feeling remained to do him honour when, after twenty years more, his death was announced. It was Bannister who recommended Fawcett to Colman as his successor; and Colman thought that in Dr. Pangloss, in Colman's own play of the *Heir-at-law*, Fawcett excelled Bannister. And now Fawcett, Colman, and Bannister all left the world within half a year.—Colman wrote for Mrs. Bland, in all his musical dramas, if indeed his musical dramas were not written for Mrs. Bland; and now she went too, at the beginning of 1838.—The writer of several favourite pieces played in the days of this group of actors and ever since—*A Cure for the Heart-ache*, *Speed the Plough*, and others—Thomas Morton, the dramatist, died at the same time with his old friends; and he was presently followed by another dramatist, popular in his day—Boaden, the biographer of the Kembles.—Charles Mathews had ventured upon the stage before the last century was out; but it was

in his boyhood, and without his father's knowledge. As an established actor, he belonged to our century, his first decided success being subsequent to 1810. Being lamed by an accident, and finding his wonderful imitative faculty more genially and freely exercised in such entertainments as those called 'Mathews at Home,' than in regular acting, he became the kind of performer that we all remember. Probably no man called out more mirth in any nation than Mathews among us, who do not laugh enough; or among the Americans, who laugh more than we do, but still not enough. Mathews could make all hearts merry but his own. His health was bad; and visitations of epilepsy in his early life left him subject to depression of spirits which nothing could clear. While imitating all he saw and heard, wherever he went, as if the spirit of fun was always overflowing, his heart lay heavy within him. No one knew better than he that, while the wit of one man is related to the mirth of another, the two capacities are not necessarily connected in the same individual. As a man may be mirthful without wit or fun, so a man may have wit and fun without mirth; and poor Mathews would often, like many other wits, have been glad to exchange his mirth-exciting powers for the mirth he excited. He died on his fifty-ninth birthday.—When the elder generation is boasting of the dramatic favourites of the last century, the young people are usually deciding within themselves that the favourite of their own day could never have been surpassed; and at the time before us, the young lovers of the musical stage were content to hear of the pets of their parents while they could go and listen to Malibran. She was not English by birth; but she became English by education and through her hearty adoption by the English people. Her childhood was hard and laborious; and her genius broke forth in wildness of exertion and of mirth by turns. She hardly knew what repose was; and she died of exhaustion at the age of twenty-eight. She was a wonderful creature; able to achieve whatever she attempted, and able to aspire to more than most people could conceive. The unhappiness of her life no doubt stimulated her professional exertions, and helped to wear out her frame. She allowed herself to be wedded, when very

young, to an elderly French merchant at New York—M. Malibran, who soon afterwards went to prison for debt. She believed herself deceived, gave up her marriage-settlement to his creditors, and returned to Europe, where, in 1836, at Paris, she obtained a divorce which set her free to marry again—which she did at once. In six months afterwards, she was dead; and in two months more, died her first husband. Her labours, and the wearing kind of toil consequent upon fame, had long been undermining her strength; and at the Manchester Musical Festival of September 1836, she sank, after having thrilled the souls of the audience with her last strain, 'Sing ye to the Lord.' Her voice, and the mind that it carried, thrills yet, and ever will, in the hearts of those who heard her most worthily; and the youngest of these will boast of her to their grandchildren as old men now magnify the Siddons, and, in the dearth of opera, the Catalani of their day.

When a man of business is a man of letters, and finds himself equally at home in London drawing-rooms and in the counting-house, he contributes a large portion to the respectability of his country, where such a union of pursuits is not so common as it ought to be. Richard Sharp, commonly known as Conversation Sharp, was a man of this order. He was partly occupied with commercial concerns, and left behind him upwards of £250,000; yet Sir James Mackintosh declared him the best critic he had ever known. He published letters and essays which justified his position as a man of letters; he had a seat in parliament for several years, and was the associate of the most eminent literary men of his time. He died, in old age, in 1835.—Alexander Chalmers died at this time—the indefatigable editor of a host of works, and writer of the greater part of the *Biographical Dictionary* which goes by his name. He is remarkable for literary industry rather than for any other merit in his contributions to literature. —A quiet, modest, but most eminent public benefactor who died at this time was Robert Lemon, of the State-paper Office. Everybody knows how, in rummaging among dusty and neglected papers, he found Milton's manuscript; but few know how much else he found among the cobwebs. To his industry and sagacity we owe

the rescue from rot and oblivion of a mass of valuable materials for history; and also such a reform of our care of state-papers as may save us from quenching the historical lights for which we are answerable to future generations. The India Company was at one time very near purchasing the services of Mr. Lemon from the State-paper Office; but Lord Sidmouth, made aware of his value by his superiors in office, increased his salary to an amount on which he might live decently; and perhaps the future histories of England may be of a far higher, and those of British India of a somewhat lower character, for this appropriation of £200 per annum. It was Mr. Lemon's labours that suggested to Sir R. Peel the appointment of commissioners to examine and publish such state-papers as were lying neglected; and Mr. Lemon was the secretary of the commission thus obtained. The first publications were of the documents of the reign of Henry VIII.—Sir William Gell, the classical antiquary, who opened to us so much topographical illustration of ancient historical scenes or fictions, died in 1836, at Naples.

Death swept away, during this period, a whole group of distinguished orientalists. Dr. Carey, the missionary, died in 1834, at Serampore; and a few weeks after him, Dr. Morrison, the eminent Chinese scholar at Canton. The lapse of time lessens our confidence in the results of missions to the east, and of negotiations with oriental powers, by revealing more and more of the difficulty of rapidly acquiring the oriental languages so as to be able to employ them in such serious affairs as the uprooting of old religions, and the negotiation of political or commercial alliances. It is now well known to many that shocking errors have existed throughout in our translations of the Scriptures into eastern languages, and that it is difficult for a missionary preacher to utter a discourse without conveying something that it would make his hair stand on end to be aware of; and it is well known that miserable misunderstandings from English blunders about Chinese proclamations precipitated, if they did not cause, the Chinese war. When, therefore, we read of Dr. Carey's success in giving the Scriptures to forty nations or tribes, each in their own tongue, we may well doubt how far they

really were the Christian Scriptures that were given them; and, in the case of Dr. Morrison's catechisms and tracts, how far his ideas could be communicated to the Chinese. But beginnings must be made. The zeal and benevolence of both men were unquestionable; and their learning was no doubt as reliable as the times permitted, and certainly greater than that of any other men known among us. One important part of their work was the establishment of colleges and other institutions, by which preparation is made for a more real and less dangerous intercourse with the oriental mind hereafter. Dr. Carey reached an advanced age. Dr. Morrison died in his fifty-third year, from the consequences of exposure on the Canton River, while acting as interpreter to Lord Napier amidst the disastrous transactions which will have to be presently related.—Sir Charles Wilkins was one of the first English students of Sanskrit; and he it was who originated our Bengalee and Persian publications, by his ingenuity and skill in preparing the requisite types with his own hands. This was in the last century, for he was eighty-five when he died in London, in 1836.—His son-in-law, Mr. Marsden, also a great orientalist, followed in the next year, leaving us much new knowledge about Sumatra and the Malayan Archipelago, several dictionaries and grammars of eastern languages, and a singular collection of oriental coins, which he presented to the British Museum. He was but little younger than his father-in-law, having attained the age of eighty-one. He presented his noble library to King's College, London; and resigned, because he did not want it, his rewarding pension of £1500 a year. This was an honourable life of industry, usefulness, and disinterestedness.—The most eminent Chinese scholar left after these losses, Thomas Manning, departed also in 1840. The mystery which hung about China when he was young, so completely took possession of his imagination, that he could attend to nothing at home but the studies which might fit him for exploring the forbidden land. He qualified himself as highly as was then possible, went out to the east, and tried long and often, and always in vain, to penetrate China, either by Canton or through Tibet. He got in at last, in the train of Lord Amherst, in 1816.

His first publication, when he was quite young, was on algebra; and he would have been eminent as a mathematician, if China had not come in the way. The readers of Charles Lamb's letters know how jealous he was of the China—the unrepaying China—which deprived him of Manning's society for so many of the best years of their lives.

Charles Lamb had already been some time gone when Manning died. That gentle genius, heroic and genial, enjoying and suffering, at once—sportful and enduring—noble and frail—loving others as an angel might, and himself beloved as an infant and a sage in one—departed while he could yet ill be spared, before he had passed his sixtieth year. He was one who could never, at any age, have been willingly spared while his mind could work and play, and his hesitating speech could convey its burden of thought, and pathos, and wild wit; but his special work in life—the guardianship of his accomplished, but infirm and dependent sister—was not done when an accident—a fall whose consequences were fatal—disposed of the matter, and gave a new tenderness to the pathos, and a solemnity to the wit, of the *Essays of Elia*, which had been read before under a hope that, while Elia lived, we might have more. Charles Lamb was an exquisite ornament of his time—as he would have been of any time; and he was its serious benefactor too, in as far as he called out and fostered the spirit of geniality, in which, above everything, our time is deficient. There seems to be a prevalent impression that he was of greater mark than his writings will account for; and this is probably owing to the spirit of those writings being far higher than their pretensions —that they were so instinct with genius, that their form, and even their amount, is a matter of little concern.—An aged lady died in 1838, whose name should not be omitted, though it belongs only to the lightest order of literature, and had long lost the great distinction it had once enjoyed —Mrs. Grant of Laggan. Her *Memoirs of an American Lady* were interesting before the United States were as familiar to us as they are now; and her *Letters from the Mountains* are a good example of the epistolary style in literature. She lived to feel extreme surprise at the

American colonists for daring to desire a separation from England, and at the seditious tendencies of English society which could countenance the presumption. She lived, as was natural, in the scenes of her youth, as regarded both America and Scotland, and her readers dwelt upon the achievements of her youth, in acknowledging their obligations to her. She was eighty-four when she died.

Her countryman, John Galt, was, like herself, a highly popular writer in his day, and, like her, could not reconcile himself to the state of things on the other side of the Atlantic. He lived for some time in Canada, but was involved in such disputes as he was too apt to find grow up about him; and he is most pleasantly remembered by his Scotch novels—the *Ayrshire Legatees*, the *Annals of the Parish*, the *Entail*, and others. He died in 1839.—The Irish novelist, Gerald Griffin, died in the next year—young, but having ceased to write novels. After giving us the *Collegians*, and *Tales of the Munster Festivals*, he retired to a monastery, and devoted himself to religious observances for the short remainder of his days.—In the same year went the most popular of female novelists, however we may wonder at the fact. Fanny Burney happened to reach her prime at that period of the last century when conventionalism had touched its last limit of excess. She was herself full of life, and of what would have been naturalness at any other time than that in which she lived. She was too full of vigour and ability to be silent; and the result is, that she has given us full and faithful pictures of the conventional life which to her appeared natural. It is now scarcely possible to read her *Evelina* and *Cecilia*, with all their elaborate delicate distresses, which could never have happened to ingenuous people, and which a breath of good sense and sincerity would at any time blow away in a moment; but the enthusiasm about these novels in their day proves that they were true to their time, and that they ought so far to have value with us. In her youth, Fanny Burney was evidently charming—with her heart, and her wit, and the touch of the hoyden mixing curiously with her innocent and conscientious prudery. But, at last, her fame was too much for her. It led her into the service of royalty,

which is not a natural consequence of literary fame; and she was not suited to the position, nor the position to her. The artificial part of her character overgrew the natural; and her later writings are unreadable from their affectations. Her precious heart must have become sadly impoverished before she could employ herself, as she did in her latter days, in revising for the press the affectionate family and friendly letters which had passed between herself and persons long dead, and in arranging, while on the very verge of the grave in which we look to bury our vanities, the records of the interminable and extravagant compliments paid to her half a century before, by kind-hearted great men, whose follies of the moment should have perished with the moment. We owe to her, however, in these *Memoirs*, gratitude for a great service. Her gossiping volumes are full of interest, of unconscious revelations of herself, far more charming than all her consciousness, and of historical material, from her familiarity with the court, and with most of the eminent persons of her day. Miss Burney married, at forty, an emigrant artillery-officer, being sure at any time of large sums of money for any novel she chose to write, and actually receiving 3000 guineas for the first she wrote after her marriage—*Camilla*. She survived her husband and only son, and died in her eighty-eighth year.

Two popular female poets departed untimely during this period—Mrs. Hemans, who was in her forty-second year; and Miss Landon, known in the world of letters as L. E. L. Mrs. Hemans died in Dublin, in 1835, after a long illness, and after a separation of many years from her husband, who left chiefly to her the charge of their five sons. Miss Landon married, and went out to Cape Coast—somewhat wilfully, but under a sense of duty, and died there suddenly, a few weeks after her arrival at the castle—as was supposed, by taking an overdose of some deleterious medicine. A more mournful story than hers is seldom heard—illustrative as it is of the perils, snares, and sufferings of a literary life, where the responsibility of the vocation is not felt with the seriousness which shames cupidity, and silences flattery. People inferior to herself made money and amusement out of her talent and

herself; and she permitted them to do it—partly out of careless generosity, and partly because she was too little aware of the responsibility of genius. Carefully cultivated, her genius might have accomplished great things. As it was, her early and wonderful facility is nearly all that remains for admiration. By her personal friends she is remembered with an affection which has nothing to do with her writings; and by those who did not know her, her writings are regarded with an indifference almost as great as her own.—Mrs. Hemans's poetry was of a far higher order. It was deformed by a mannerism of that degree which is fatal to permanence of popularity; and there is not much substance of thought. But the sentiment is commonly as true and natural as the expression of it is otherwise; and of a depth which always insures its freshness. The substantial power of Mrs. Hemans is, perhaps, best shown in her choice of the subjects of her smaller pieces, which is so rich in suggestion, and so full of the keen and sagacious apprehension that belongs to genius, that it is almost a greater treat to look over the table of contents of her minor poems, than to read the poems themselves. Her fame—a genuine and reasonable fame, depending upon her qualities, and not upon any accident of the time—had spread widely over the European and American continents, many years before her death; and there are thousands living to whom the slightest casual recollection of some of her poems will be, to the day of their death, like the singing of a dirge in the recesses of their hearts.—Thomas Haynes Bayly, whose songs were sung in the streets, and who was therefore a public benefactor, died, in his forty-second year, in 1839; and, in full age, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd—a man of stubborn purpose and graceful imagination—of unscrupulous manners and delicate sentiment; a man who taught himself to write with such labour, that he began his task by taking off his coat and waistcoat, but who produced his songs with such facility, that they seem to have presented themselves to him like a group of sun-touches on the prominences of his native valleys and hillsides. His life was one of painful vicissitudes, from his want of prudence, and of knowledge of the world. The *Queen's Wake* is the

poem which established his fame, and by which he is best remembered; but perhaps a stronger interest attaches to him from his intimacy with Sir Walter Scott, and a far stronger still from the circumstances of his origin and rise in life, to a high place among the authors of his time.

Mr. Lodge, who contributed by his famous portraits, and other works of antiquarian biography, to future achievements in the department of history, died in 1839, holding the office of Clarenceux king-of-arms.—Dr. Gillies, who gave us a history of Greece, and translations of much Greek oratory and philosophy, had ceased his labours for many years, and now, in 1836, died in his ninetieth year. —In the same year, we lost James Mill, best known as the historian of British India, but also celebrated as the chief follower of Bentham, and the author of works on mental philosophy and political economy. His *History of India* is the work by which he will be longest and best remembered. He held an office in the India House which afforded him access to a great wealth of materials; and he so wrought his mind into his task as to have strengthened and illuminated his narrative with principles of legislation, and views of social organisation which gave his work a value that nothing can supersede. We may and must have others, written by men who have seen India, and who can contribute much that did not lie in Mr. Mill's way; but nothing can now prevent his being the history which first presented the great subject of India to the best part of the mind of England, and largely influenced the administration of that great dependency. It is a well-known virtue of the India Company that they discover, and employ, and reward the best men, in a way that administrative bodies very rarely do. In this case, as in others, their generous prudence was richly rewarded; for Mr. Mill was able to do more for their empire than they, with all power and willingness, could do for him.

A man of great celebrity died at the close of 1834—of a celebrity out of all proportion to the knowledge of his works. Mr. Malthus was perhaps the most abused man of his time; but he was so well aware that the abuse never proceeded from those who had read his writings, that it did not trouble him, nor in the least impair the sweetness of

his temper, or the quiet cheerfulness of his manners. It was he who first placed clearly and by elaborate statement before society the all-important fact which lies at the bottom of the poverty of society—that the number of consumers naturally presses upon the means of subsistence; and that, while the numbers and the means of subsistence are not proportioned to each other by the exercise of enlightened prudence, poverty and misery must always exist. The illustration of the doctrine is simply this: that a piece of land which will exactly support a family of four or five persons will not support the spreading families of those four or five persons; and the moral inference from this is, that forethought ought to be exercised about the future subsistence of such families, or their numbers will be reduced by hunger or disease. Any illustrations or amplifications of these simple facts which may be found in Mr. Malthus's works, and which may be misunderstood or disliked, cannot impair the great service he rendered in pointing out the fact which lies at the bottom of social destitution; nor can any discoveries or recognition of means of increasing food by improving the productiveness of land at home, or drawing from a larger area abroad, touch his theory more or less. Whatever blessings, whatever intermissions of anxiety, we may obtain by such methods, the fact remains that human families expand in numbers while cornfields do not expand in size, nor, by any means discovered or conceivable, in a productiveness which can keep pace with human increase. Mr. Malthus's simple humanity was shown in the readiness and plainness with which he made known this essential truth. The hardness and cruelty would have been in concealing it after it once became apparent to his mind. As for the foolish and disagreeable notions which are too commonly associated with his name and theory—such as that he desired that poor people should not marry—they may be regarded as mere unfounded imputations, cast upon his works by careless rumour; in spreading which, however, those are not guiltless who have the opportunity of seeing for themselves what Malthus did think and say. His works will probably be little read henceforth; for the first and chief, his *Essay on Population*, has answered its purpose.

All who turn their thoughts towards political economy at all are aware that a determinate stock of food which is just sufficient for a certain number must be insufficient for any greater number; and that, while we have among us so much destitution as we see, it must be a consideration of the first moment so to educate the rising generation, and so to arrange the inducements of their life, as to train them to prudence for their own comfort, and humanity towards their children. The service which Mr. Malthus did to society was in fixing its attention upon the laws of increase of eaters and of food, and on the morality—a cheerful and genial morality, opposed only to licence—which is indicated by those natural laws. Mr. Malthus was a clergyman, and professor of history and political economy at the East India College at Haileybury. His life was useful and innocent, serene and cheerful—supported and graced by universal respect and love among those who knew him. He reached his sixty-ninth year.

An old antagonist of his—a man who was in a state of antagonism to much that is in the world—William Godwin, died in April 1836. Godwin was a man of great powers, insufficiently balanced; and, as the European world was, in his youth, a mighty conflict of great powers insufficiently balanced, he was just the man to make an impression of vast force on the society of his day. Soon after his *Political Justice* was published, working-men were seen to club their earnings to buy it, and to meet under a tree or in an ale-house to read it. It wrought so violently that Godwin saw there must be unsoundness in it; and he modified it considerably before he reissued it. His mind was acute, and, through the generosity of his heart, profound; but it was one-sided. With us, society and government had been one-sided in the opposite direction, and it was a benefit to us all that, when driven from the purely conventional view of things, society fell in with a Godwin who presented, in the broadest manner, the natural. He suffered, individually, from the antagonism, and so did many of his disciples; but it was the safest thing for society at large, in that crisis, to have the whole material of social philosophy, the whole choice of social organisation, exhibited before it at once. There can be no doubt that

government and society in England at this day are the better for the astuteness and the audacity, the truth and the error, the depth and the shallows, the generosity and the injustice of Godwin, as manifested in his *Political Justice;* and thus he was one—though perhaps the most unpalatable—of the benefactors of his age. Many who do not regard him from this point of view are grateful for his wonderful novels—*Caleb Williams* and *St. Leon.* These are but a small portion of his works; but they are those by which he is best known. He controverted Malthus, he wrote a *History of the Commonwealth,* and a series of historical books for children; and in short, was busy with his pen through the greater part of a long life. He was the husband of Mary Wollstonecraft, whom he lost a few months after their marriage. In his old age, a small sinecure office was given him by the Grey ministry, with rooms in connection with the House of Commons; and there he loved to show the old Star-chamber which was so soon to be destroyed before his face; and to exhibit the tallies, the burning of which was to occasion the destruction. On the night of the fire, he was at the theatre; and when it became clear that his chambers were in danger, his strong-minded old wife would not have him alarmed by a message, but managed to remove his property before he returned to be amazed at the sight. He was saved the worst part of the shock, and lived for nearly a year and a half afterwards, when he quietly sank out of the life he loved so well, in the eighty-first year of his age.

The interests of the period now closing were so various, so widely spread, and, through the weakness of the government, so desultory, that it has been a task of no slight difficulty to bring them together, and present them in any effectual sequence and natural connection. We have now before us the closing period of this history, in which the events seem to draw together in their very magnitude, and to prescribe their own order, which will be interrupted only by some necessary retrospect here and there.

BOOK VI.

CHAPTER I.

General Election—New Parliament—Queen's Speech—The Address amended—Queen's Household changed—Resignation of Ministers.

THE general election of 1841 was one of extraordinary importance. It was not that any one great question was now, as in 1831, to be settled by a House of Commons which should be, in fact, an assemblage of delegates; but that something yet more important should be done. The ministers hoped, and apparently believed, that the country would support them on the free-trade question as it had done on the parliamentary reform question; and they calculated on beginning a new career in virtue of their proposal of a fixed duty on corn. But in this they were three times mistaken. The people were not yet ready for such a struggle on this question as they had gone through ten years before for a greater; if they had been ready, the free-traders could not have carried their point under those oppressive provisions of the Reform Bill which secured the preponderance of the landed interest in the representation; and again, they had not that confidence in the government which could stimulate them to any effectual effort on behalf of the government proposition. Nothing had happened for some years to give them any confidence in the Whig administration; and much had happened every year to prevent their trusting Lord Melbourne and his colleagues with the subject of the corn-laws. The ministers who carried the Reform Bill had advocated parliamentary reform for a long course of years—had seen the truth, and spoken for it, and were fit to act in its behalf when the season came; but the men who now assumed to be reformers on the corn question had, both in and out of

office, steadily resisted this very reform, while in possession of precisely the same means of information which they had at present. The premier had pronounced the proposal of corn-law reform mad; and Lord J. Russell had called it mischievous, absurd, impracticable, and unnecessary. He had resisted such proposals ever since he came into office—at first contemptuously, and then vehemently; and when he, at last and somewhat suddenly, declared himself in favour of a moderate fixed duty, he had no right to expect the support of the nation. The ministers had no right even to resent popular doubts of their sincerity; but there were thousands who declined entering upon the inquiry as to the sincerity of ministers who yet positively denied their trustworthiness. The question was too important to be committed to the management of men who had, for nine out of ten years of office, acted strongly on the wrong side; and who had, for several sessions past, shown that they could not conduct any important business whatever. The corn-law question was not therefore that on which the elections proceeded, on the whole, though the Conservatives and the immediate adherents of the Whig government agreed in putting it forward as the ground of their conflict. The government candidates shouted forth Lord J. Russell's fixed duty as their election-cry; but they met with little response from the people. The people at large felt that a more important consideration than even corn-law reform was pressing.

The more sagacious and better educated among them put their conviction into words; but many thousands felt and acted upon the conviction who could not put it into words. They felt that the very heart of our political virtue and honour was eaten out by the incompetence, moral and official, of the Whig administration. During their protracted decline in power, in reputation, and in character, they had dragged down with them the aspiration, the earnestness, and the hope of the people; and the political deterioration must be endured no longer. Not only had parliamentary reform become almost a cant term under their ineffectual and unprincipled rule; but the very virtue which had achieved that reform was starved out by the same sponsors who had offered themselves

before the congregation of the world to cherish it. The indifferent had, under Whig rule, become more indifferent; the sceptical, more doubting; the timid, more disheartened; the earnest, more angry from year to year, till they were now exasperated into an opposition as fierce as could be offered by the most antiquated or selfish of the landed interest. It would be no small gain, in displacing the Whigs, to be relieved about the transaction of the daily business of the nation—to know that the government was in the hands of men who could prepare acts of parliament, and obtain accurate information, and procure good servants, to do their work without blunders and delay. It would be a yet greater gain to obtain relief of mind about our financial affairs—to feel that the money-matters of the state were in able hands, and that the immoral and destructive process was stopped of sinking deeper into debt every year, finding the annual deficit in no degree repaired, but only met by loans, and covered over with explanations, and smiles and promises. Greater still would be the gain of having any set of men in power who would cause political action in the people. There was no apprehension that the old Tory rule would ever be revived. From the day when the Duke of Wellington and Sir R. Peel had stood forth as reformers in any department of principle, all possibility of rank Tory rule was over. The question now was only of degrees and modes of reform; and if men of any party were once in place who had any power to govern, and any political honour to guard, the people might and must co-operate with them, either in the way of support or opposition; and that political life would revive within the heart of the nation which had well-nigh died out under the chill of hopelessness on the one part, and the poison of contempt on the other. The extraordinary importance of the elections of 1841 lay—not in any pretence of settling the corn question—but in the opportunity afforded of dislodging the tenacious tenants of the public offices. Notices to quit had been in vain; and twice had the day of reckoning been got over by an exercise of royal favour. Now the time was come for taking off the roof, if the people so pleased. They did so please; and very thoroughly they did the work.

Throughout the elections, the support of the government was made a confidence question. Fatal as was this method of appeal, the Whig government had no other. And it was on the ground of promises only that they could ask for confidence. The appeal on the ground of their services in carrying parliamentary reform had been so long worn out that the elections of 1837 had been carried by the free use of the queen's name; and nothing had happened since to justify an appeal to anything in the past. They now asked for confidence on the ground of what they intended to do; but this is an appeal ill becoming any ministry at the end of ten years, almost uninterrupted, of power; and it was wholly inadmissible from an administration which had once assumed the title of reforming, but had long since fallen back under its old title of Whig. The people refused the great confidence vote on their wide floor within the four seas; and prepared for the refusal of the smaller confidence vote which was to be asked for within the four walls of their house of parliament.

Lord J. Russell stood for the city of London, and was returned by a majority of only seven over the fifth candidate, who was a Conservative. Two Conservatives and one Liberal were above him on the poll. Some mirth was excited by the zeal of certain of the government party who commemorated this victory, as they called it—though two Conservatives were let in—by a medal, showing on its reverse side a wreath of wheat-ears, and the motto 'Free-trade,' with the additional words '*Per mare per terram;*' which were translated 'One foot on sea and another on shore' ('to one thing constant never'). The few victories of this kind gained by the ministers were as fatal as their defeats; for they could not afford to have their great towns neutralised while the counties were returning Conservatives in overwhelming numbers. Lord Howick was rejected in Northumberland, and Lords Morpeth and Milton by the West Riding of Yorkshire. While free-trade professions were vague and faint, declarations of want of confidence were loud and clear in some of the largest towns. Complaints—no doubt just—were made on every hand, of corruption; and it was believed that such an amount of bribery had seldom, if ever before, been

known; but no one could say that the one party was more guilty than the other. It was alleged, and truly, that the Conservatives had been more attentive to the registration than the reformers; and this was one of the most mortifying tokens of the popular indifference to the Whig government. The result was, a Whig majority of 9 in Scotland, and 19 in Ireland; and a Conservative majority of 104 in England and Wales. In the elections of 1837, the government majority had fallen to 16, according to some authorities; 12, according to others. Now, the government was in a minority of 76; and this great Conservative majority was sure to be largely increased, as soon as power should pass from the Whigs to the opposition—there being always in parliament a considerable body of men disposed to support the government, whatever it may be.

The end was known to be near. The queen and her household had learned their part in the ensuing changes by painful experience. The ladies prepared to resign their offices in good time, and the queen prepared herself to accept their resignation without objection. The new parliament assembled on the 19th of August, Lord J. Russell and Sir R. Peel meeting at the bar, and shaking hands 'very cordially.' Mr. Lefevre was rechosen speaker with the smoothest unanimity; and then everybody waited for the royal speech. Next, there was much comment on the speech being delivered by commission, while the queen was in good health, the weather fine, and her majesty known to be usually disposed to enjoy these public occasions. It was alleged that the queen's physician had advised her majesty to stay at home; and this again fixed expectation on the speech. It was natural that the sovereign should feel some emotion on meeting a parliament elected for the very purpose of overthrowing an administration to which she was attached by all the associations of her accession to the throne, and by ties of confidence and custom; but further reasons for her absence appeared when the speech was read. It was singularly controversial in its tone, and was therefore far from being the kind of address which it suited the dignity of a sovereign, or her relations with her parliament, to deliver by word of mouth. Not only were the lords and gentlemen in parliament re-

quested to consider the corn-laws, but they were to determine whether those laws did not produce this and that and the other bad consequence. It is inconceivable that the ministers should not have foreseen the embarrassment in which they would have placed their royal mistress, if parliament should 'determine' that the corn-laws did not produce these bad consequences; a determination far more probable than an agreement of the majority of this particular parliament with the opinion of the queen. This singularity in the speech pointed to the necessity of a dissolution of this parliament, unless the existing ministry should be displaced before any debate on the corn-laws came on; and it rendered indispensable a protest on the part of certain members against the unconstitutional aspect given to the speech by the sovereign being brought forward to make the first move in a great controversy. A few nights afterwards, Lord J. Russell was so appealed to by Lord Stanley as to be forced to an earnest declaration that the speech expressed the sentiments of the ministers, and that they alone were responsible for anything that it contained.

The address was moved in the Upper House by Lord Spencer, and seconded by Lord Clanricarde; and both speakers openly and at length condemned the existing corn-laws. It was impossible to enter into controversy on this point in preparing an answer to the speech in which the sovereign's opinion appeared to be declared; and the amendment moved by Lord Ripon therefore took another ground. It expressed the alarm of parliament at the continued excess of expenditure over income—promised careful consideration of the interests commended to them —but declared that nothing could be done while the government did not possess the confidence of the House or of the country, and that her majesty's present ministers did not possess that confidence. This amendment was carried by a majority of 72 on the night of the 24th of August. A similar amendment to the address in the Commons was proposed by Mr. Stuart Wortley, who had succeeded Lord Morpeth in the representation of the West Riding of Yorkshire; and it was carried by a majority of 91. The last acts of the Whig government deepened their

unpopularity with their best remaining supporters—those who had yet hoped to carry some goodly measure of free-trade by their means. These were displeased that the corn-law question should have been so mixed up with the personal interests of the ministers as to share in their personal discredit. They, however, voted in favour of the ministerial address, for the sake of the free-trade principle. Yet was the majority against ministers in both Houses as overwhelming as has been seen. It only remained for the sovereign to communicate her reply, and for the ministers to resign. The reply was dignified. The queen expressed her satisfaction at the spirit in which parliament proposed to deliberate on the matters she had recommended to them, and declared, in conclusion: 'Ever anxious to listen to the advice of my parliament, I will take immediate measures for the formation of a new administration.' This message reached the Commons on Monday, August 30; and on Thursday, September 2, the queen spent her last evening with the household whom she had declared to be so dear to her. Scarcely a word was spoken at the dinner-table; and when she was with her ladies afterwards, tears and regrets broke forth with little restraint. They were natural and amiable. It was no fault of hers—nor of theirs—that their connection was made dependent on the state of political parties. The blame rested elsewhere, though the suffering was with them. Everybody pitied the young sovereign, and saw and felt the hardship; but there were many who looked forward cheerfully to an approaching time when she would know a new satisfaction in reposing upon an administration really strong, efficient, and supported by the country, and on a household composed of persons among whom she could make friends without the fear of their removal from any other cause than her wish or their own.

On the night of Monday, August 30, Lord Melbourne in the one House, and Lord J. Russell in the other, declared that, in consequence of the votes of both Houses on the address, the ministers had resigned their offices, and now continued in their places only till their successors should be appointed.

Thus was the Melbourne administration out at last.

Men had waited long, if not patiently, for this issue; and the general satisfaction was evident enough. Perhaps it was worth waiting so long to see the exhaustion so complete. It afforded every needful advantage to the incoming administration, and it yielded a striking lesson to all governments and their constituents. No government had a fairer chance than that of the Whigs from popular and royal favour—no government had a clearer task to perform, or more aids and supports and stimulus in the performance; and, when it became apparent where the want of strength and clearness lay—that their principles were weak, their views obscure, their purposes fluctuating, their knowledge deficient, and their political honour relaxed—no ministry of such popular promise ever sank so low. It was well for the political morality of the country that the case was so clear—made so clear at last by the suicidal appeal to the country in the elections. This clear exposition of the case might afford some reparation—the only reparation possible—for the mischief of a long retention of office by men who could not, with all means of power in their hands, govern the country. The people, who had for years been divided between apathy and fretfulness under a tenacious but helpless administration, might now hope to enjoy the repose of confidence in the midst of activity in obtaining reforms. They would now have able men, in a united cabinet, to deal with; and it would depend much on themselves what the direction should be that the ability of the ministry should take. If the Peel cabinet should prove a reforming one, that would be the best thing that could happen. If it should prove still too conservative, there was now a fair field of opposition open, in which the political life of the country could exercise itself, and ascertain how much energy it could still command.

CHAPTER II.

New Administration—Lord Aberdeen—Sir James Graham—Lord Stanley—Lord Wharncliffe—Mr. Gladstone—First Nights in Parliament—Prorogation.

THE distribution of office was watched with great eagerness by the whole country. The first great hope was, that Sir Robert Peel would unite the offices of first lord of the treasury and chancellor of the exchequer. The most pressing evil was the state of our finances. The people were becoming fretted and alarmed at the annual deficit, for the cure of which no vigorous measures were taken; and the distress had now, for a long time, been such as to pull down the national courage, and press the working-classes into depths of hopelessness. If any power could redeem us from this distress and debt, it was Peel; for we had no other such financier. There was some regret, therefore, when it was known that Mr. Goulburn was made chancellor of the exchequer; but still it was considered certain that Peel's mind would preside in that department, and that all its action would proceed upon his views.

The next most interesting point was, who was to be foreign secretary, and who at the Board of Control. Next to retrieving our affairs at home, was the consideration of keeping the peace in Europe and America, and returning to a state of peace in Asia. Our accord with the United States was in peril from boundary questions which we shall have to review, and from the right-of-search question, which threatened also to embroil us with powers nearer home. Our 'good understanding' with France was far from being what it was; and the right of search, and some Spanish difficulties, made our peace with the French very precarious; while the sagacious saw that the great continental struggle, so sure to happen, might henceforth begin on any occasion of provocation, however slight. And we were now, as will presently be seen, actually at

war with China, and suffering under an accumulation of disasters in India. After twenty-six years of peace, we were apparently in imminent danger of war, at a time when everything was going wrong at home; when agriculture was moaning with hunger, and manufactures seemed dying, and commerce was well-nigh bankrupt; when Ireland was stirring in rebellion, and the working-classes in England and Scotland were growing desperate, and debt was stealing upon us, and the nerves of the stoutest were beginning to be shaken, from the young sovereign in her palace, to the field-labourer in his damp hovel, and the gaunt weaver chafing beside his empty loom. It was no time for war; and great was the importance of appointing men in connection with foreign affairs, and with the India House, who should be trustworthy for prudence and a quiet demeanour, and averse from meddling and noise, showing their sense of their country's dignity and honour by taking them for granted, and relying upon them. Lord Ellenborough was at the Board of Control; and people thought this a very doubtful appointment. It did not mend the matter that he soon went out to India as governor-general. It was impossible to suppose him the right man for such offices at such a time. The appointment of Lord Aberdeen as foreign secretary was more fortunate. It was soon evident that the honour of England and her peace with the world were safe in his hands. 'It seems strange,' observed an eminent American statesman to an English traveller, 'that we republicans should be glad when your Tories come into power. One would think that our sympathies should be with your reform governments. But the truth is, we cannot get on with your Whig ministers. They do not understand business, and they do not understand official good-manners. Your Tory ministers are able, and attentive, and courteous; and when we do not agree, we are not likely to quarrel. But with the Whigs, we have to forbear, and nothing goes smoothly.' This feeling being shared by other governments, the chances of peace were much improved by the retirement of an unpopular foreign minister, and the appearance in his stead of one of such weight of character, and quiet dignity of temper, as Lord

Aberdeen. Another thoroughly satisfactory appointment was that of Sir James Graham as home secretary. His quality had been proved by the good work he had done at the Admiralty. Lord Ripon was not thought strong enough for his post at the Board of Trade. Lord Stanley was unhappily made colonial minister—an office for which superhuman powers and angelic attributes of temper are requisite; and in which his superficial cleverness, and his insolent and irritable temper, might work more mischief in five years than a century could cure. Another objectionable appointment was that of the Duke of Buckingham to be lord privy seal; but the displeasure at this was soon put an end to by the duke's retirement from office, on his discovery that he was a member of a reforming administration. Another who had no business in such a ministry, was Sir Edward Knatchbull; but he was only paymaster of the forces, and naval treasurer, and not a man of any ability; so that his power for mischief was small. Lord Lyndhurst was, of course, lord chancellor. Lord Wharncliffe, president of the council, perhaps, proved as agreeable a surprise to the nation as any one of his colleagues. Amidst some old Tory tendencies to regard office too much as a personal and family privilege, and too little as a trust, he manifested, throughout his term of occupancy, such an earnest desire for the promotion of popular education, such liberality of views, such sagacity and diligence in business, as made him one of the most valued members of the government.

Out of the cabinet, the most notable man was, perhaps, Mr. W. E. Gladstone, who was vice-president of the Board of Trade, and master of the Mint. The character of his mind was not very clearly understood; and the prevalent doubt was whether he understood it himself; but enough was known of his seriousness, his thoughtfulness, and his conscientiousness, to cause him to be regarded with emphatic respect and hope, at a time when earnest men were to be prized above all others. Some other young men came into minor offices, from whom much was expected by the few who already knew them—as Lord Lincoln, heir of the Duke of Newcastle, and the Hon. Sidney Herbert; Lord Lincoln going to the woods and

forests department, and Mr. Sidney Herbert being secretary to the Admiralty. Lord Lowther was postmaster-general; Lord G. Somerset, chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and Sir George Murray, master-general of the ordnance.

The day after the mournful dining of the court, when the queen and her household were about to part—to undergo a separation far more complete than would have been necessary if they had not been at once near relations of the late ministers and her majesty's domestic companions—the queen had to go through much painful business. On that Friday morning, September 3, crowds thronged the approaches of Claremont, where the court was staying. It was not like an ordinary change of ministry. The exhaustion of the Whigs was so complete, that men knew that a former period of national history was closing, and another coming in; and the crowd was on the watch, that gray autumnal morning, not only for the old ministers and the new, but for every incident which might be construed as an omen. The old ministers drove up first, in plain clothes—were admitted to the royal presence, and delivered up the seals of office. Meantime, the new ministers arrived in court-dresses; and 'the first sunburst' occurred as Sir R. Peel drove in at the gates. He was warmly cheered, as was the Duke of Wellington; and both looked very well pleased, the people said. When the ex-ministers departed, Sir R. Peel had audience of the queen, to kiss hands on his appointment; and after him, the Duke of Wellington, and three or four more. Then the queen and Prince Albert repaired to the corridor, and held a privy-council, the queen declaring Lord Wharncliffe its president. The swearing-in of new members was got over quickly—the whole business, with luncheon, occupying only half-an-hour. By half-past two, the anxious young sovereign was left to make domestic acquaintance with her new household, and to miss the familiar friends under whose guidance she had been accustomed to do her share of state business. She was probably little aware how soon she could repose entire confidence in her first-minister, and feel a new kind of ease about the conduct of public affairs.

The next amusement for observers was seeing the

eminent men of the country change places, on the re-assembling of parliament on the 16th of September. The new ministers had lost no seats in the process of their re-election; and they therefore assembled their whole number. Some of the Liberals went over, and occupied the front benches of opposition; some seemed at a loss where to place themselves, after having sat in the same seats for ten years, with only a short interval. One or two members, too Radical to belong to any party, would not move, but sat composedly among the Tories. The next interest for those who saw how serious was our condition, was in hearing the minister's statement as to how government meant to proceed. The chancellor of the exchequer must ask a vote of £2,500,000; and he would then state how he proposed temporarily to meet the existing deficiency. At the beginning of the next session, ministers would declare by what large measures they proposed to rectify the finances of the country, and equalise the revenue and the expenditure; an object of the very first importance in their eyes. Lord J. Russell made captious and taunting speeches, finding fault with this delay, and calling for an exposition of the government policy in regard to the corn-trade, within a month; and this provoked a retort from the minister, in the form of a question why the late government had deferred for five years of power a question which they would not now allow a new ministry five months to consider and mature; and thus it was immediately evident that there was to be parliamentary strife between the late and present leaders in the Commons. It was harrowing to the feelings of men of all parties to hear the statements made of the intense suffering of the operative classes from hunger, and the frequent declarations of their representatives that many of them could not live to learn what measures government would propose for their relief; and to the minister it must have been wearing to be appealed to, night after night, to declare what he proposed to do for the relief of the starving, and reproached in advance as purposing to keep up the price of food, and to sacrifice the lives of the poor to the purses of the aristocracy. These things seem foolish now—hasty, pettish, and unreasonable; but we must

remember that Sir R. Peel and his cabinet were, as yet, believers in the sliding-scale; that, while exposing the bad qualities of Lord J. Russell's 8*s.* fixed duty, they had not yet given the slightest intimation that they had anything better to propose; and that their opponents were truly heart-stricken at the spectacle of the misery of the manufacturing districts; while, from long habit, they regarded the Peel administration as purely aristocratic in its temper and principles. The premier's replies were uniformly calm and quiet. He would not be forced to any disclosures before his colleagues and he were prepared with their plans. No one could grieve more deeply and sincerely for the distress of the people; but, the deeper that distress, the more careful should government be to avoid rashness in legislation and in promise. He would not countenance the delusion that it was possible to relieve the popular distress immediately by any parliamentary measure whatever. The only thing that legislation could do was to remove obstruction, to lay the foundation of improvement, and work a gradual amelioration in the condition of society. Those who heard him, and those who read his speeches, under the prejudice of his former Toryism, told the people that, having the powers of government in his hand, he now refused to do the first duty of the government—to employ and feed the people. This is worth noting in evidence of the retribution which Sir R. Peel had to undergo for his ancient opinions or party connections, and of the ignorance in regard to the functions of a representative government which existed, nine years after the passage of the Reform Bill, among a considerable number of the men who had caused that bill to pass.

The minister's difficulties were increased by an unfortunate declaration of the Duke of Wellington's in the House of Lords—that there was no deficiency of corn in the country; that the distress had nothing to do with the food question; that it was owing to want of work and of wages, and other causes; but that he never heard how parliament could do anything in such a case. Probably, no one expected the Duke of Wellington ever to come out as a political economist, or supposed that, at his years, he could be taken in hand as a pupil by Sir R. Peel; but it

reflected some discredit on the government, and confirmed certain despairing statements of opposition members, when so eminent a member of the new government could see no connection between food and work—food and wages; and no evidence that the food question was concerned in the existing intolerable distress.

The chancellor of the exchequer early proposed to provide for the £2,500,000 (nearly) which was required for the public service, by selling stock for the emergency —declaring his dislike of increasing the debt, and his intention of proposing, in the next session, comprehensive and permanent methods of provision for the public service. There was much natural repining at any increase of the debt, and much denunciation of the method, as if the need had been the work of the new government; but the thing was agreed to, because, in fact, nobody saw anything else that could be done. The poor-law commissioners' powers were renewed for six months, that the relief of pauperism might not stop till the subject of the poor-law could be reviewed in parliament. The opposition to this brief and indispensable renewal showed how serious a matter the review of the law would be, and indicated that the question of pauperism would be one of the most pressing 'difficulties' of this, as of every administration. These, and some other matters being temporarily arranged, parliament was prorogued by commission on the 7th of October. The speech did not, this time, express any opinions on the corn-laws, but declared that the attention of parliament would have to be given, as soon as possible, to the means of equalising the national income and expenditure, and of providing against the recurrence of the terrible distress which had for long prevailed in the manufacturing districts—a distress for which her majesty expressed the deepest concern.

The prorogation was to the 11th of November. Meantime, the speech was a riddle for the politicians and the sufferers of the country to ponder; and the ministers had enough to do in considering and settling their plans for the retrieval of our affairs in the far east, and about our own doors. The news which arrived from the one and the other region was enough to try the courage of a Wellington, and exhaust the resources of a Peel.

CHAPTER III.

Policy of China—State of China—The Opium Question—British Superintendents—Lord Napier—Political Relations in Abeyance—Opium Traffic Prohibited—Negligence at Home—Crisis—War—Chusan taken—Negotiation—Warfare—Captain Elliot superseded—Sir Henry Pottinger—Capture of Ningpo—Treaty of Peace—Governor-general sent to China—Opium Compensation—Sir Henry Pottinger's Testimony.

For more than a century past—ever since our relations with India became a matter of popular interest—it has been a subject of speculation or observation why there was so little war in the heart of Asia, among those steppes which, according to all analogy, would be supposed likely to be the scene of constant or ever-renewed warfare. While, in the centre of every other great continent, there are interminable feuds, apparently necessitated by geographical conditions, the interior of Asia, where the same geographical conditions exist, has, for above a century, been as quiet as if it had been a maritime territory. The great table-lands are there, rising shelf above shelf, till it dizzies the imagination to mount the vast stair, from the steaming plains of the Ganges and the Camboja up from height to height of the Himalayas and the Snowy Mountains, finding at the top but little descent on the other side; but again, range above range of table-land, still rising till that deep interior is reached which no stranger may penetrate, except some wandering Russian trader, or adventurous pilgrim, who once in a century or two may get in, if he cannot get across. The ordinary and necessary population of such lands is there—the Tibetian and Mongolian; apparently so apt, and once so ready, for war; yet, as we know from the facts of surrounding countries, no warfare has been carried on in those wild regions for above a century.

The reason is that a policy of peace has been the deliberate choice of the empire of China. There is no chance

in the matter; if there were, the chances for war would be overwhelming. It is an affair of deliberate choice and fixed principle, in regard to which the whole arrangements of the empire have been made. There is no regular army in China—not because the Chinese are ignorant of armies and war-policy, but because they dread a military sovereignty, and military contests for the throne. The statesmen of China are ready to explain, when they can find foreigners able to understand their language, and willing to know their minds, that they abjure conquest for the same reasons which make them avoid danger of a military despotism; because they desire a settled and industrial mode of life for their people, and to restrain the tribes of the interior by an immutable course of policy, rather than by force of arms. This method is partly suggested, and altogether favoured, by the natural defences of the country. If war can be prevented from springing up in the great interior plains, their bounding mountains may keep the empire pretty safe from foreign invasion. All along the vast Siberian frontier, and that of Independent Tartary, and along the northern spurs of the Himalayas, there is a militia—Manchoo, Mongolian, and Tibetian—whose rough organisation is of a feudal character, and which serves as a sufficient defence of the empire without any trained army. As for the sea-board—till lately, the Chinese had no foe to contend with but pirates; and their rude vessels are able to cope with that enemy. When the possibility of assaults from Europe and America presented itself to them, they declare that they weighed the comparative merits of two plans; and here again deliberately made their choice—to abide by their peace-policy. If they set to work to raise a navy, they must be taught, aided, and officered by foreigners; and from that moment, both their objects—civil sovereignty and unbroken peace—would be in peril: the other plan was therefore chosen; and, on demand, commercial advantages were granted to Europeans and Americans, as far as this could be done without breach of the exclusive policy of the empire, and only as a less evil than war. In both its aims, the Chinese Empire succeeded for a longer period that it is usual to see empires pursue definite aims. There have been no conflicts

between the throne and the army, or between the throne and the people, or by the throne and army together against the people, such as have, through all time, ravaged empires in certain stages of civilisation. The few divisions of trained soldiery which guard the capital are scattered, as garrisons, among the large towns—are not an army, and could hardly form even the nucleus of one; and where there is no army, there can be no real political relations with any foreign country. The Americans have long understood all this, and have acted upon their knowledge—seeking no political relations with China before the British compelled them to do so, but carrying on a most lucrative trade, and maintaining the most friendly private relations with the Chinese, by means of merchant-vessels, without a hint of naval armaments, and through the agency of supercargoes, without any mention of ambassadors.

The principle of Chinese policy may be judged by nations or individuals—it may be admired, excused, criticised, wondered at, pitied, or laughed at; but it *is* a principle—entitled to the respect due to principles wherever they are found. It may be that the immutable policy of China itself must be proved, like all work of men's brains and hands, subject to mutation under the operation of time. It may be that, to Europeans and Americans, such a policy may appear not only blind and weak, but morally indefensible; but not the less is it a very serious thing to explode a system so ancient, so full of purpose, and so energetically preserved. If the exploding process is begun in ignorance and self-interest, and carried on in ignorance and a spirit of scorn, it is a more than serious—it is a sad and solemn matter. This process took-place under the successive Whig administrations, from the formation of the cabinet of Lord Grey to the dissolution of that of Lord Melbourne; but it was not the Whig ministers alone who were responsible in the matter. The melancholy ignorance and scorn which led us into what will ever be called the Opium War were shared by the opposition, and by the great body of the nation. What faults of management there were must be imputed to the ministers of the day and their supporters in this affair among the opposition; but if hereafter the opium-war with China appears in the

eyes of the historian and the moralist a disgrace, it will be as a national disgrace; for the people put no effectual check upon the government, but rather stimulated its action, by sharing its ignorance and vying with its spirit of scorn. There was scarcely a school-boy on the American sea-board who could not have justly rebuked our city electors, our newspaper editors, and our statesmen of every party, about our opium-war.

It is probable that this war would never have taken place if our knowledge of the Chinese had been sufficient to allay our spirit of scorn. The popular English notion of the Chinese seems to have been held by the government, and the agents they sent out, who might have learned better by seeking information from merchants resident many years in the country. The general notion of China was and is, of a country dreadfully overpeopled, so that multitudes are compelled to live in boats, floating about to pick up dead dogs for food; that they are tyrannised over by a Tartar government which they would fain be rid of, and by an aristocracy which will permit no middle class; that they call foreigners 'barbarians,' and designate Europeans by foul epithets instead of their proper names; and that their sole endeavour in regard to foreigners is to insult and mock them. Merchants of any nation who have lived long enough in the neighbourhood of the Chinese to be qualified to speak of them, give a very different account from this. They declare that the government is on the whole favourable to the industry and comfort of the people; that the people are easy and contented; that the rights of property are respected, and that there is a large and wealthy middle class; that literature is the highest pursuit; that the Chinese possess a greater body of literature than Europe can show; and that nothing is known among us of its quality, as it remains wholly unexplored; that the notion of insulting epithets being applied to our agents in lieu of their own names is an utter delusion, arising from ignorance of the fact that the Chinese, having no alphabet, are obliged to express new names by the words in their language which approach nearest in sound. Thus, when Lord Napier fired up at being written down 'laboriously vile,' Mr. Morrison was written down 'a polite

horse,' and another resident at Macao, 'a cwt. of hemp.' Such misconceptions of Chinese character and condition, together with our bigoted persistence in conducting intercourse with a singular state according to our own customary methods and forms, and not theirs, were a bad preparation for the management of difficulties, if such should arise; and the event was painful and discreditable accordingly.

One of the great branches of the trade of the East India Company was in opium with China; and when the Company's charter expired in 1834, the trade was vigorously pushed by private merchants, who purchased the article from the Company. The Chinese government had long desired and endeavoured to stop the opium-trade, as purely mischievous to the people. Whether the motives of the government were philanthropic or politic—whether it mourned over the popular intemperance in opium-smoking, or feared the effects of a constant and increasing drain of its silver-currency, does not affect the question; nor is it of any consequence to us, in regard to the controversy, whether the political economy of the Chinese government in interfering with trade was good or bad. The facts were that all traffic in opium was expressly forbidden; that British merchants nevertheless carried on a profitable commerce in opium—not only smuggling it in as our smugglers bring in brandy and gin, but making a lodgment in the country, for the article and its sale, under shelter of the arrangements for a general trade at Macao and Canton; that the government was, for a course of years, supine in trusting the enforcements of its prohibition to its provincial authorities; that it roused itself gradually, repeating the prohibition, with warnings more and more emphatic; that the prohibition and warnings were wholly neglected, and it became necessary to make the matter—or let it be made—a cause of war. As the *Colonial Gazette* pointed out, it is as if—the growth of tobacco being prohibited in the British Islands—the merchants of France should steal into our county of Kent, establish tobacco-growing, sell the produce freely among our people, and fix an agent at Dover, to superintend the affair. In such a case we should hardly offer so many warnings as the Chinese government did, before putting

the agent into confinement, while the tobacco plants were destroyed.

This opium-trade proceeded under the eyes of the superintendents appointed by the British government to manage our commercial affairs in China, after the throwing open of the trade in 1834. The appointment of these superintendents as political agents, was a melancholy mistake which could not have been committed by any government aware of the inability or indisposition of the Chinese to enter into any political relations whatever. Lord Napier was the first chief-superintendent sent out; and some glimpse of the truth as to what our intercourse with China ought to be, appears in Lord Palmerston's instructions to Lord Napier, not to pass the Boca Tigris, at the entrance of the Canton River, in a ship-of-war, as 'the Chinese authorities have invariably made a marked distinction between ships-of-war and merchantmen, in regard to the privilege of intercourse.' Lord Napier, however, took his own way, against this and every other warning. Up to the time of his arrival at Macao, on the 15th of July 1834, the Chinese had heard nothing of any appointment of superintendents; and great was their perturbation at the pomp and bustle in which they found themselves implicated. Mr. (now Sir John) Davis, was the second superintendent, and Sir George Robinson, who understood the case better, and acted more sensibly, than anybody else, was the third. Lord Napier was expressly directed to announce his arrival at Canton by a letter to the viceroy. He did so; and he went up the river in an armed vessel. From this first moment, all went wrong. The letter was declined, because, by the customs of the country, the agent's arrival must be notified to the government before any intercourse could be established; and Lord Napier had already broken through all rules in coming up the river in defiance of a direction to wait at Macao for a pass. He was told that the Hong merchants were the party through whom communications like his were to be forwarded; as only memorials and petitions were received through the channel that he had attempted; and two Hong merchants, bearing credentials, waited upon him to hear what he had to say. Lord Napier, however, dis

missed them courteously, insisted on seeing the viceroy, or writing to him ; and at last, in order to get a letter into his hands, wrote upon it the word 'pin,' or 'petition.' It does not seem to have occurred to him that provincial authorities had no power to alter in his favour the established forms of the government; and he regarded as a personal insult every impediment to the transaction of his business.

It was at this stage that he took offence at the writing of his name—'laboriously vile,' as he was assured it meant. His letter did not succeed. Next, he had an interview with three eminent mandarins of the province; but he hurt their feelings by insisting on their chairs of ceremony being placed according to his ideas, and not according to custom; so they referred him back to the Hong merchants. He refused to see them. He was ordered down the river. Instead of going, he summoned two men-of-war into the river. The alarmed and perplexed authorities declared trade suspended; and Lord Napier replied by a proclamation to the Chinese merchants, in which he complained of the ignorance and obstinacy of the viceroy. It was not possible for the Chinese to bear this; and, as Lord Napier would not depart as desired, he was dislodged by such methods as the inhabitants could command: they placed a guard round his residence, who kept away his native servants, and prevented the carrying in of provisions. Meantime the two frigates were working their way up the river, fired upon from the batteries on shore, losing two or three men, but doing more damage than they received, till the anxious authorities, still awaiting instructions from government, offered to let trade proceed if Lord Napier would withdraw to Macao. He had also written to his own government for instructions; but it would be so long before he could receive an answer, his situation was so embarrassing, his nerves were so fretted with anxiety, and his frame so fevered with heat and incessant worry, that he sank under his sufferings. Though surrounded by his family, and supplied with excellent medical assistance, he died shortly after his return to Macao. The more mournful this death, the more evident is the justice of the Chinese

viceroy's argument in his proclamation: 'The Chinese nation has its laws. It is so everywhere. England has its laws; and how much more so the Celestial Empire! The said foreign minister having crossed a sea of many thousand miles to inquire into, and take the superintendence of commercial affairs, ought to be a person acquainted with the principles of government, and with the forms essential to its dignity.' Acquaintance with the language ought to be added. Not only did Lord Napier bitterly complain of the terms 'barbarian' and 'barbarian eye' being applied to him, but it was urged upon Lord Palmerston from other quarters to insist on the omission of such terms from all future instruments of negotiation; whereas, it turns out that no offence whatever lies in the terms—the true translation of 'barbarian eye' being 'head of the southern people,' or 'foreigners from the south.' The Chinese may need improvement in their geography; but they so far understand courtesy as to use the proverb: 'He that spits dirt first defiles his own mouth.'

The viceroy, meantime, requested the British to appoint a commercial superintendent, who should control the smuggling of opium. The practice had now become too open and extended to escape the attention of the government at Pekin—nearly forty opium-vessels being then anchored at Lintin. The Chinese official at the same time expressed a desire that a commercial chief should be sent out from England, who should not be a king's officer. No notice was taken of these demands—the hope being that the Chinese would in time be driven by embarrassment to admit the agency of political officials.

After January 1835, matters went on smoothly for two years, owing to the good sense of Sir George B. Robinson, then chief-superintendent, in consequence of the death of Lord Napier, and Mr. Davis's return to England. Captain Elliot, R.N., who had been secretary to the commission, was now a superintendent. Sir G. B. Robinson sent home agreeable accounts of 'a quiet and prosperous routine of trade,' owing to his pursuing 'a perfectly quiescent line of policy.' He wrote these words on the 16th of October 1835; and we find him declaring, more than

thirteen months afterwards, on the 28th of November 1836, that he has received no despatches 'conveying his lordship's sentiments or instructions relative to the quiescent course of policy he had deemed it his duty to persevere in;' this quiescent policy not meaning idleness on his own part, as he was all the while performing duties 'of a consular nature.' He had not now to wait long for an answer. His salary of £6000 a year was not to be paid for quiescence; and we find him, on the 14th of December, acknowledging the arrival of an intimation that his office was abolished. Yet, Lord Palmerston wrote, within five weeks before, to Captain Elliot, that a deputy-superintendent had been appointed 'to act as assistant to the chief-superintendent;' and Captain Elliot immediately assumed the title laid down by Sir G. B. Robinson. The inevitable impression on the minds of observers was, that the 'quiescent' agent was dismissed to make room for one who would make more noise in the Chinese seas.

In 1838, the opium-smuggling had reached such a pass, that the government at Pekin evinced an intention of abolishing the traffic at last. Our own government had been repeatedly advised of the growing danger by Captain Elliot, who, in November 1837, foretold that the authorities would be driven to some violent measures, from the injurious audacity of Europeans, who actually carried opium up the Canton River in their own boats. He advised that a special commissioner should be sent out to Chusan, or some other eastern port of China, to settle this bad business in a fresh scene, at a distance from the embarrassments which now attended all negotiations at Canton. The government declined taking any steps of the kind.

Captain Elliot's position was now as difficult as could well be conceived; and in judging of his conduct of affairs, it should ever be borne in mind that he was left cruelly destitute of guidance from home. Some of the gravest letters he wrote, the most pressing and anxious, were received in Downing Street on the 17th of July; yet Lord Palmerston sent no reply whatever till the 2nd of November. Among the items of information thus treated was one of the last importance—that a high official had sent a memorial to the emperor at Pekin, advising that the

sale of opium should be legalised, under a duty of seven dollars per chest. The banishment of this adviser to Tartary was an indication of vigorous resolution to put down the sale of opium, which should have roused our government to immediate activity in stopping the illicit trade, instead of waiting nearly four months without even answering Captain Elliot's letters. The answers at last conveyed no instructions or guidance to the anxious superintendent; and seven months more passed before Lord Palmerston wrote again—the date of the next despatch from Downing Street being the 15th of June 1838. At last, some decision had been come to by the government; and it was one very embarrassing to Captain Elliot, from being so long delayed. The government resolved, very properly, to leave the opium-smugglers to meet the consequences of their ventures, in the loss of their property, if the Chinese government chose to decree its forfeiture. If this had been made known at the proper time, neither the merchants nor the superintendent would have had any cause of complaint.

Before the end of the year, a seizure of opium, the property of a British trader, was made at Canton; and the man, and the ship that brought his merchandise, were ordered out of the river. Yet more, the Hong merchant who secured the ship and cargo was punished with the severe punishment of the wooden collar, though he had nothing whatever to do with the offence. The decision of the question was evidently coming on.

In January 1839, proclamation was made in Canton of the approach of the imperial commissioner, Lin, whose business was to abolish the opium-traffic, and who came furnished with summary powers for the purpose. Just before the great man appeared, a native opium-smuggler was brought into the square before the foreign factories, and publicly strangled, amidst much pomp of military array. As soon as he arrived, Commissioner Lin issued his edict, requiring the foreigners to deliver up to him all the opium on the coast, in order to its being destroyed by burning; that a bond should be entered into that ships should bring no more opium; and that, if any were brought after this, it should be forfeited, and the bringers

put to death without controversy. The edict intimated that the foreigners had everything to hope if they obeyed, and everything to fear if they were negligent or hostile. At the same time, Lin required the presence before his tribunal of Mr. Dent, one of the most respectable of the English merchants; and to this Captain Elliot consented, on condition that Mr. Dent should be permitted to remain by his side, and not taken out of his sight for a moment. On the same night the factories were blockaded by boats on the river, and soldiery in front and rear; the servants were called out, and provisions prevented from going in. Captain Elliot saw no alternative but delivering up all the opium on the coast of China; he issued an order which summoned all the ships below the Boca Tigris, where 20,283 chests of opium were landed, and delivered over to the Chinese authorities. When the transfer was completed, and not before, the blockade was broken up, and the foreigners set free. Sixteen only were detained at the factories; and after a time they were permitted to depart, under an injunction never to return. Captain Elliot wrote urgently to the governor-general of India, Lord Auckland, in complaint—a complaint which sounds rather strangely to those who understand the nature of the traffic, and the warning so amply furnished to the traffickers—of that 'course of violence and spoliation which had broken up the foundations of this great trade, as far as Canton is concerned, perhaps for ever;' and he requested as many ships of war and armed vessels, for the defence of life and property, as could be spared from India.

This seems to have been the last point at which a turn might have been made towards the right, and peace have been preserved by an act of simple integrity. The home government had declared: 'Her majesty's government cannot interfere for the purpose of enabling British subjects to violate the laws of the country to which they trade. Any loss, therefore, which such persons may suffer in consequence of the more effectual execution of the Chinese laws on this subject, must be borne by the parties who have brought that loss on themselves by their own acts.' This is clear enough; and it can never be too deeply

lamented that Captain Elliot departed from the whole spirit and purpose of these, his latest instructions, by identifying himself, and the imperial authority which he held, with the opium-smuggling, on suppressing which the Chinese government had now staked its power and its character. If he could not help doing this—if he was pledged by any former acts to stand by the smugglers—the error is only set back to an earlier date. The thing was now done; Captain Elliot was pledged on behalf of the vicious trade, and had sent to India for as many vessels of war as could be spared.

From this time, there was no more peace. From August 1839, there were affrays between our sailors and the villagers on the coasts; thwarting and misunderstandings between the Chinese authorities and British officers; a cutting-off of provisions, and prohibition to trade. Captain Elliot petitioned Commissioner Lin for the restoration of trade, in accordance with the laws of both countries, till he could receive tidings from home; but his petition was contemptuously rejected. Commissioner Lin declared that no intercourse should take place between the two nations till the British sailor who had killed a Chinaman in a fray should be given up. However, the authorities relented so far as to permit trading to go on below the Boca Tigris; and vessels might even have gone up to Canton if the captains would have signed a bond agreeing that any introducer of opium should be punished according to the laws of China. In Captain Elliot's eyes, such a concession was wholly out of the question, as signing the bond was, in fact, giving over English opium-smugglers to capital punishment at the discretion of the mandarins, whose strictness about evidence might not equal our own. A Mr. Warner, master of the ship *Thomas Coutts*, did, however, sign this bond, without consulting anybody, greatly to the annoyance of the superintendent and the British merchants. Commissioner Lin was delighted with him, and forthwith insisted that all British vessels should enter as the *Thomas Coutts* had done, or depart within three days. The British believed they saw signs of the Chinese intending to attack their ships; and of course they prepared for battle. The

Chinese war-junks anchored near the British ships on the 3rd of November, and the English were required to deliver up the offender who had been so often demanded. In reply, the British vessels poured a destructive fire into those of the enemy; and the war was begun. The poor unaccustomed Chinese suffered terribly, and were presently disabled; but they rallied their spirits when they saw the foreign ships retreating to Macao, and supposed that the enemy was as wretched as themselves; whereas the retreat to Macao was merely for the protection of the merchants, and to aid the embarkation of the British residents.

By the next June, an imposing array of British men-of-war, with attendant steamers and transports, was seen off the coasts of China; and the injured Chinese were doomed. They made what efforts they could to get rid of the encroaching and insolent strangers, who had violated their laws, to make profit of the intemperance of their people. It is said that they poisoned a boat-load of tea, for the use of the British sailors, but that it missed its way, being taken by pirates, so that the wrong party suffered by the device. It is certain that they made many attempts to burn our ships by fire-rafts; and that, in their simplicity, they advertised rewards to persons who should capture Englishmen—warning them to be particularly careful not to take Portuguese or others; and no less a sum than 20,000 dollars to any one who should secure one of our men-of-war, carrying not less than eighty great guns, and deliver it to the mandarins. With all this simplicity about war, its horrors were never met or endured by braver men. About this, the testimony is absolutely universal. The most perverse of our countrymen who defend this war at home or on the spot—who call it a 'just, necessary, and honourable war;' who are not afraid to pray for the aid of Heaven against those whom we have oppressed, or to return thanks for victory; or who profess to regard the affair in a missionary light, and talk of bringing the Chinese to the knowledge and love of that Christianity which we have so disgraced in their eyes—all agree that a nobler courage and constancy were never manifested than by the Chinese who fell in the field, or before their little forts, or on the threshold of their homes,

which they had thought safe from invasion for ever, because their own policy was one of peace. British officers might laugh when they saw pasteboard defences, pasteboard men, and wooden cannon mixed in among the troops, to make a show and terrify the foreigners; and British sailors, little knowing the mental torture they were inflicting, might jokingly secure their prisoners, by tying them together in sixes by their tails; but there was no man, we are told, from the highest officer to the lowest subordinate, who was not touched by the spectacles of devotedness that he saw when citizens cut the throats of wife and children, and then their own, rather than yield to the terrible foreigners; and when officers in the field sought death with desperation when all chance of victory was over. They no doubt agreed with the saying of their emperor: 'It is no longer possible to bear with the English. Gods and men are indignant at their conduct;' and when they found these hated strangers victorious, they could no longer endure life. As they heard, after the first British conquest, that the enemy had pushed their opium-trade vigorously, selling 400 chests at very high prices, they might agree with their emperor's public declaration, that it was worth every effort in war and watchfulness, to prevent the ingress of that depraving religion called Christianity. They could hardly hold any other view when the only Christians they knew were the opium-smugglers, and the officials who conducted war in their defence. They fought, indeed, with as hearty a hatred of the invaders as ever the Saxons felt towards the Normans of old, or the Mexicans against the army of the United States in our day; and no one can deny that they had cause.

The narrative of the war may be briefly given. The first conquest was of the island of Chusan, which lies about midway on the east coast of China Proper. The Chinese admiral, who was also governor of the group of Chusan Islands, was startled by the appearance of a British fleet on the 4th of July 1840, when he was wholly unprepared for resistance. He went on board the *Wellesley*, with two mandarins, when he admitted his weakness, and endeavoured, by various devices, to gain time; but he well understood, when he left the ship, that if he was

not prepared to yield up the island by daybreak, it would be taken from him. In the morning, however, a great array of troops was seen on the shore, in and about the chief city of the island, and in the war-junks which had been brought up. Fighting went on all day, and up to midnight, with little or no damage to the invaders. During the night, the British placed ten guns within 400 yards of the city. At daybreak, the flags were flying from the walls as before; but all was quiet within. Only a few unarmed Chinamen were left, who held up a placard on the walls: 'Save us for the sake of our wives and children.' The British flag was hoisted; and news of this, our first conquest, was despatched to India and home. It was a disastrous conquest for us. The troops drank largely of spirit made from rice; the salt provisions from India were bad, and scarcely any fresh could be obtained. The men were mutinous and sick; and fever so prevailed as to obtain for Chusan the name of our eastern Walcheren. In a very short time, of above 3600 soldiers left in Chusan, more than a third were unfit for duty.

On the 9th of August, Admiral Elliot, who had sailed northwards with a part of the squadron, arrived in the bay into which the Peho, or river of Pekin, flows. Captain Elliot, who accompanied the admiral, went up the river with armed boats, and obtained an interview with the third man in the empire, Keshen, who was appointed by the emperor to negotiate. The emperor first obtained delay—during which the ships laid in supplies of provisions and water—and then, by some unaccountable means, induced the admiral to transfer the negotiations once more to Canton. The error of leaving the vicinity of the capital, to go and treat in that distant spot where negotiation had always hitherto been in vain, was severely blamed at home. The matter was not, however, to be again discussed with Commissioner Lin. He was disgraced, and Keshen sent to occupy his post. Admiral Elliot threw up his appointment on the ground of illness.

Keshen's policy was delay. He protracted the negotiations in order to provide defences for the Canton River so far superior to any yet encountered by our troops as to prove that even the Chinese could become warlike by

practice and experience. When Captain Elliot was worn out by delay, he turned the affair over to Commodore Sir Gordon Bremer, who had no notion of waiting any longer. He opened his fire upon the forts from the river, on the 7th of January 1841, and took two of them. A flag of truce, and promises of greater speed arrived the next morning; and on the 20th, the superintendent issued a circular announcing the settlement of the preliminaries of a treaty. The treaty contained no mention whatever of the opium-traffic, the sole occasion of the war; and it was otherwise so unsatisfactory that the ministers announced in parliament, on its arrival, that it was to be disallowed; that Captain Elliot was recalled; and that Sir Henry Pottinger was going out to assume his office. Meantime, Sir Gordon Bremer, never doubting the fulfilment of the treaty, sent orders to the British in Chusan to evacuate the island; and he took possession, in the name of the queen, of the island of Hong-Kong, off the mouth of the Canton River—this island being given to us by the treaty. On the 19th of February, the war was renewed by a shot being fired from one of the islands at a British boat. Our vessels and troops went up the river again on the 26th, and carried all before them—knocking over the forts, killing several eminent men among the foe, and taking many hundreds of prisoners. By the beginning of March, Keshen had been degraded, and when, on the 5th, the British ships were visible from the walls of Canton, there was no dignitary in the city who was empowered to treat with us. The naval and military commanders would have proceeded to take everything into their own hands; but Captain Elliot requested them to wait till it should appear how the provincial authorities were disposed. Sir Le Fleming Senhouse, who had led the way in the late attacks, chafed under this delay; and Sir Gordon Bremer wrote home his fears that the lenity would be misunderstood. Attacks and retaliation were renewed; and before the end of the month, the Chinese flotilla was destroyed, and the union-jack was flying from the walls of the British factory at Canton. It then appeared that Keshen had been waiting for the sanction of the treaty by the imperial government, and that his government liked the

terms no better than ours did. The emperor rejected the treaty, and resolved on war. Sir Gordon Bremer immediately started for Calcutta, to obtain reinforcements; and Admiral Senhouse assumed the command in China.

The next movement was an attack by the British, no otherwise provoked than by the spectacle of increasing arrivals of Tartar troops at Canton during six weeks of truce and partial trading. This attack took place on the 24th of May. In two days, Canton was all but taken. It lay completely in the power of the British; and Sir Hugh Gough, and Admiral Senhouse, who accompanied him into the field, were in high hope of presently announcing the capture of the city, when the superintendent again interfered, and desired them to wait while another treaty was negotiated. Sir H. Gough never concealed his mortification; and Sir Le Fleming Senhouse retired to his ship fevered with disappointment, and died heart-broken on the 14th of June. Four days after this mournful death, Sir Gordon Bremer returned; and he was announced to the Chinese as joint-commissioner with Captain Elliot. But their task was taken out of their hands by the arrival of Sir Henry Pottinger, on the 9th of August—presently after which the displaced superintendent sailed for Bombay.

Sir Henry Pottinger made a spirited announcement of his intention of closing the war at once, regardless of all mercantile and other retarding considerations, and devoting himself to compel the Chinese to conclude a peace honourable to England. No time, indeed, was lost. Before the end of the month, the city of Amoy was taken, and a garrison was left in an island in the harbour. When the mandarin who was second in command saw that all was over, he rushed into the sea, and drowned himself; and another cut his throat upon the field. Early in September, Chusan and its city were again taken, though they were now much better defended than formerly. The large city of Ningpo, fifteen miles inland, fell undefended into the hands of the invaders; and wherever the British now appeared, little or no resistance was made. An interval of some months, however, revived the courage of the inhabitants; and in March, a great body of Chinese came over the walls of Ningpo early in the morning, to recover

the place. The British saw them, and took no notice till the market-place was full of them, when our troops brought up some guns, and made such slaughter, that 250 bodies were left upon the place. There is little record of any loss on our part, though the despatches tell here and there of 'severe loss,' 'a heavy fire,' and so on. We read of battles and sieges with a loss, in one place of fifteen lives, in another of two, in another of none; only 'a few casualties from the arrows of the Chinese.'

Month after month passed away, and Sir H. Pottinger had not compelled a peace, though the forces took cities, and destroyed barracks, magazines and fortifications, wherever they chose to turn. The appearance of the troops before Nankin settled matters at last, in the summer of 1842. It was the 26th of August, more than a year after Sir H. Pottinger's arrival, when the treaty of peace was finally concluded on between three Chinese and the British commissioner.

By this treaty, the British were authorised to trade freely at four ports besides Canton, and to establish consuls there. The island of Hong-Kong was ceded to them; and they were to hold Chusan and another island till all the conditions of the treaty were fulfilled. Correspondence between officials of the two governments was henceforth to be conducted on equal terms. The Chinese were to pay to the British the sum of 21,000,000 of dollars (£4,375,000) by instalments, in addition to 6,000,000 (£1,250,000) already paid by the authorities at Canton as compensation for the opium destroyed. The instalments of Chinese silver continued to arrive in England at intervals, till all was paid; and thoughtless people in the roads and streets walked beside the heavy waggons with complacency; and others, present at the opening of the chests, looked at the curious coin with amusement and pride. They were led into this by members of the government and of parliament, who called this 'a just, and necessary, and honourable war,' and by the common run of newspapers, which detailed every fault in the circumstances and civilisation of the Chinese, as if we were called as missionaries or liberators to set things right; or imputed bad motives to the emperor in interdicting opium; or applied

droll epithets to the Chinese in contempt, and offered literal translations of documents which would not bear a literal translation from even any European language; or related how it took several hours to convey to an educated Chinese the meaning of three lines and a half of an English newspaper; not perceiving the inference that we had probably been misunderstanding the Chinese as thoroughly as they were incapable of understanding us. Insolence and folly like this are very excusable in the ordinary run of untravelled English who met the waggons of treasure from China —who conceive of nothing beyond England, and have not any living idea of difference of race, and of mental and political constitution. The disgrace of the levity and insolence rests with the members of parliament, the popular orators, and the editors of newspapers, who, if they spoke at all, should have spoken with a better knowledge, and more sense of justice and generosity. They should have asked themselves first, under a knowledge of the facts, whether, if they could suppose the English to be right in this quarrel, they could venture to pronounce the Chinese wrong?

It cannot be without much pain and sorrow that, in a History of the Thirty Years' Peace, the narrative can be offered of this Chinese war. It is impossible not to see the insolence of the very term; for, if the Chinese had not been too pacific and helpless to withstand our injuries, we should not have had thirty years of peace even to talk about. It is a yet more serious consideration that, if we had not involved ourselves in wrong, we should not have been under the temptation of shirking the name of war, calling it 'operations in China,' when we went into the reality. Whichever way we look at this affair, there is no comfort —at least for those who cannot be comforted with dollars, or pride in our warlike resources and experience. We are hated in China, not only as their conquerors, but for our forcing upon their society the contraband drug which they would have kept out of the reach of the intemperate of their people—by means which we may laugh at, but which they had a right to adopt. It is an humbling story; and the wonder to a future generation will be, how we bear the shame of it so easily as we do.

It was on the 3rd of March 1843, that the first instalment of the Chinese treasure arrived at the Mint—an amount of £1,000,000 sterling, conveyed in five waggons, and escorted by soldiers. By the bursting of one of the boxes, it was seen that the silver pieces were like the half of an egg; and the spectacle so exhilarated the spirits of the 'immense crowd' that followed the waggons, that they gave three cheers, after the gates of the Mint were closed. In May arrived the presents which the grieving Emperor of China sent to the victorious Queen of England—a golden bedstead; ear-drops worth £1000 each; a shawl, on which was wrought in needle-work—as if it were a sail for Noah's ark—every kind of beast known to the Chinese; some rare silks, jewellery, and much besides. It was in the session of this year that parliament voted thanks, and government appropriated honours, to the officers and men employed in 'the late operations' in China, by whose valour and skill 'a series of brilliant and unvaried successes' was given to England to boast of. It was too like praising the skill and valour of a soldier in assaulting a Quaker, even though the resolutions were moved by the Duke of Wellington in the one House and the high-spirited Lord Stanley in the other. The next year, 1844, a governor-general over our acquisitions in China was appointed; and the choice of the ministers settled on Mr. (now Sir John) Davis, who arrived at Hong-Kong, the seat of his government, on the 7th of May. In the course of the summer, Sir Henry Pottinger, who made the treaty, sailed for England.

The question of compensation to the opium-traders long remained a difficulty. The growers of the opium were chiefly the East India Company, who hold the monopoly in India, among their territorial privileges. They had sold it to the Canton merchants; and their being paid depended on these merchants being compensated by government for the loss of their 20,000 chests of opium. The governor-general of India was earnest with government to pay the merchants; and Sir Henry Pottinger officially published his intention of urging their 'claims' upon government. 'Claims' was certainly the right word, after government had identified itself with the contraband interest in the

Chinese war; but the disgrace of countenancing the smugglers, after Lord Palmerston's declaration that they must take the consequences of having violated the laws of China, is one which any ministry might shrink from encountering. The government, by the mouth of Sir R. Peel, pronounced in favour of adhering to Lord Palmerston's declaration of 1838, so far as to take its own method of deciding how much it would pay, while the owners pleaded that their representatives at Canton gave up the opium to Captain Elliot, on his requisition 'for her majesty's service,' and on his express pledge that they should be repaid the 'value' of it; an expression which he at the time explained to mean the 'invoice price.' The claim of the merchants was eventually for the invoice price, with charges for interest and other specified matters of 17½ per cent. The government would not hear of this, but had difficulty in naming the amount for itself. Once it offered to divide among the merchants the 6,000,000 of dollars paid under the treaty as opium compensation, but the claimants spurned it. The issue was, that whereas, taking the price of opium at the lowest during the season of the seizure, the value of the 20,000 chests was £2,042,000, the government offered and paid out of the consolidated fund less than £1,250,000. The House of Commons assented, and took its share of the discreditable course of action of the government in first admitting the liability of government after Captain Elliot's pledge—then offering little more than half the value of the article surrendered; and demanding from the owners an immediate acquittance in full as a condition of receiving anything at all.

Some troubles had occurred in the intercourse of the Chinese and British before Sir Henry Pottinger left China; but his tone, on his return to England, was one of strong hope and confidence. In the manufacturing districts and elsewhere, public dinners in his honour gave him the opportunity of declaring his views. He bore the most emphatic testimony to the high qualities of the Chinese, of some whose statesmen could not be surpassed by any in the world. He plainly told the English that they knew nothing about the Chinese, and were never more wrong than in despising them, or in being careless about violat-

ing their customs and hurting their feelings. He trusted that perfect freedom of trade was provided for in that region, if only the British would act with propriety and intelligent consideration. Sir Henry Pottinger was just and generous; but he was over-sanguine in his expectations, as was natural enough in a man of his temperament, who had just succeeded in his aims. Our troubles with China are not over. They are thickening at this day; and a future generation may learn how much of the virtue of free-trade itself may be lost when it is introduced through a process of wrong and violence, under whatever name.

CHAPTER IV.

India—Troubles—North-west Frontier—Fear of Russia—Designs of Persia—Rulers of Afghanistan—British Agency at Cabool—Herat—Explanations of Russia—Lord Auckland's Declaration of War against Afghanistan—Afghan Princes—Scheme of Alliance—Ameers of Sinde—Invasion of Afghanistan—The Bolan Pass—Ghiznee—Settlement at Cabool—Khiva—Troubles of the British—Portents—The Punjaub—Recall of Lord Auckland—Lord Ellenborough—The British at Cabool—Rising at Cabool—Murder of the Envoy—Retreat of the British—Lady Sale—General Sale—Relief from India—Murder of Shah Soojah—Evacuation of Afghanistan—Lord Ellenborough's Proclamation—Recall of Lord Ellenborough—Sir Henry Hardinge, Governor-general—Sinde in 1842—Battle of Meance—Gwalior—Wyburd, Stoddart, and Conolly—Borneo—James Brooke—Labuan ceded to Great Britain.

AMONG the difficulties to which Sir Robert Peel's government succeeded, none was more conspicuous in the eyes of the world than our affairs in India. It was not that misfortunes had happened, such as must be looked for, from time to time, in all dependencies—a scarcity in one region, a case of disputed succession in another, a discontented border-neighbour elsewhere; there was quite enough of this kind of difficulty. But a far more important embarrassment was that, under their own governor-general, Lord Auckland, and by his guidance, the Melbourne administration had involved themselves in

a course of policy which, at the time of Sir R. Peel's accession to the premiership, was actually swamped by disaster.

In 1837, many troubles occupied the attention of the governor-general of India. In the hot plains which stretch south of the Himalayas, and through which the great rivers take their course, famine prevailed to such a degree that, to use the most forcible illustration offered at the time, the British residents at Agra and Cawnpore were compelled to forego their evening drive, from the air being poisoned with the smell of unburied corpses. The famine was occasioned by drought, and it was followed by diseases as ravaging as itself—by cholera and small-pox, which swept away thousands whom hunger had spared. There was insurrection and fighting in Oude, about the succession to the throne; and the British took charge of the defeated pretender—a boy—and his grandmother, as prisoners, and imposed on the new sovereign conditions of absolute obedience to the suggestions of the British government. The mountaineer population of Nepaul are never long quiet; and at this time (1837) they showed themselves disposed to pick a quarrel with us, and rendered it necessary to guard our north-east frontier in preparation for a rupture. Further round to the east, a potentate whom we had supposed a friend was showing himself hostile. The Burmese emperor, Tharawaddee, who had deposed and succeeded an insane brother, had been well thought of till power came into his hands; when he began to oppress his people, and insult the British, and threaten prodigious things; moreover, he made such preparations for assembling his barbaric rabble, and marching them to the frontier, that we had to provide for the defence of that border too. But even these interests were trifles in comparison with that which carries our view to the north-west frontiers of British India.

At this date our frontier was determined by the great sandy desert, extending from the jungles on the Gharra, in the hill-states of Gurhwal, to the sea. Beyond this desert, to the north-west, lay the Punjaub, with its five great rivers—of which Runjeet Singh was the sovereign. Beyond the Punjaub, and west of it, lay the region,

perhaps the most interesting in Asia, which has, through all known time, served as the highway between eastern and western Asia. This region lies south of Independent Tartary, which is somewhat too savage and inclement a region to serve as such a highway. The region in question, now called Cabool or Afghanistan, lies directly between the Punjaub and Persia; and all the great conquerors who have penetrated to India from the Caspian, the Black Sea, or the Mediterranean, have done so by crossing the plains and practicable mountain-passes of Cabool. There is an ancient proverb, that no one can be King of Hindostan without being first lord of Cabool. Alexander the Great went by those plains into India, after taking Herat, at the foot of the mountains, near the borders of Persia. Tamerlane conquered the region on his way to the Ganges; and so did Baber, the founder of the Mogul dynasty, before setting up his empire at Delhi. It was from Ghiznee, in that region, that the great enterprise of carrying the Mohammedan religion into India was accomplished by Mahmoud, the founder of the Mohammedan empire in India. There can be no question of the interest and importance of this great district of Asia. The question is, what had we to do with it, and why we did not confine our Indian empire, at least while the Punjaub was still quiet, within the natural frontier—as it had hitherto been considered—of the sandy desert south-east of the Punjaub? To future readers of history, it will probably appear that in the precipitancy of fear, and the confidence of ignorance, the British government rushed into vast immediate peril and disaster, to avoid a far-distant and exceedingly doubtful evil. Forecast in territorial rule is all very well; but we have arrived at an age of the world when forecast avails less than formerly, from the more general diffusion of knowledge and prevalent excitement of the human mind; and it is no longer governments that are capable of the wisest forecast. We have had many broad hints of this within our own century; and no rebuke of such presumption, and of the policy of rushing into a quarrel to preserve future peace, has been more emphatic than that conveyed in the results of Lord Auckland's Indian policy.

It has been mentioned that Russia had obtained a footing in Persia, as was shown by the emperor being appointed guardian of the succession to the throne, though the arrangement was frustrated by an unexpected death. When Mr. Ellis, our envoy, arrived in Persia in 1835, he found the Russian alliance more prized by the young shah than the British, and that the emperor's influence was paramount; though it was by means of English money and the assistance of British officers, that the shah was seated peaceably on the Persian throne. Such intelligence, arriving in England when the fashion of the time was to fear the power and craft of Russia, revived the old apprehension that Russia might, sooner or later, begin in earnest her work of conquering Great Britain by getting possession of her Indian territories. Once in close alliance with Persia, and excluding England from friendship and influence there, the emperor would find only Cabool and the Punjaub lying between his armies and our possessions. The matter was made worse—the case more alarming—by the fact that the shah was at that time, 1835, preparing to make war on the ruler of Herat, and thus to get a footing in the territory of Cabool. In the opinion of the British envoy, there really was good cause for the expedition against Herat; but the ministers of the shah did not conceal from Mr. Ellis that they had no idea of stopping short at that point, but intended to claim sovereignty for Persia over Ghiznee and Candahar; that is, almost as far as the frontier of the Punjaub. In our existing treaty with Persia, bearing date from 1814, it was provided that Great Britain should take no part whatever, unless as a mediator for peace-making purposes, by request of both parties, in any war between Persia and Afghanistan. This clause rendered it impossible for us to interfere on the present occasion; though the Russian ambassador to Persia evidently supposed that we should—the desire of England being well known to be that the quarrels among the rulers of Afghanistan should be healed, and the country made strong by the concentration of its districts under one ruler. It seemed to be fear of British interference with the claims of Persia over the great cities of Afghanistan that made the Russian ambassador so eager

for the reduction of Herat as to offer his own military services in the expedition.

Mr. Ellis warned the Persian government of the extreme displeasure with which Great Britain would regard any attempt of Persia over Afghanistan, beyond that of settling its quarrel at Herat; and he proposed that that dispute should be disposed of by negotiation, rather than by war. The Persian ministers appeared to agree to this at first, but soon evaded his offer to send a British officer to Herat for the purpose of settling the affair; Mr. Ellis daily seeing the probability draw nearer of Russian consular agents being established in the great towns up to the very borders of the Punjaub. Under such circumstances, Persia would no longer be an outwork for the defence of India, as she had hitherto been considered, but rather must be watched as an advanced-post of the enemy.

There were endless quarrels among the rulers of different cities and districts of the Cabool territory, whether of the same or different families. It would merely confuse our narrative to go at length into these. It is sufficient to say here that the ruler of Herat was the only prince in the country of the race of the founder of the Afghan Empire. The rulers of Cabool and Candahar were usurpers; and they were derived on one side of their house from the Persians through the Kuzzilbashes—the tribe of descendants of the Persian soldiers who were stationed in the mountains north of the city of Cabool. There being thus some ground of alliance between these princes and the shah, Mr. Ellis was further alarmed by their offering to support the shah against the ruler of Herat, if he would aid them on the side of the Punjaub, where they were in fear of the power of Runjeet Singh. A similar application was made, at the same time, to the court of Russia. It appeared as if everything was conspiring to bring Russia, Persia, and the rulers of Afghanistan at once, in armed alliance, within a stone's cast of our Indian frontier. It thus became all-important, in the view of the British officials at the Persian court, to secure the independence of Herat; and when terms of reconciliation were offered by the ruler of Herat, the shah

was advised by the British envoy to accept them, and warned that, if he did not, he would lie under the suspicion, with the British government, of having ulterior objects in his warlike preparations. He chose to proceed, however, and set out for Herat at the end of July—the Russian government at St. Petersburg declaring that this was against advice from Russia, which had counselled delay and negotiation, in order to avoid war. Much of the mischief now brewing arose from the impossibility of knowing what was true about the conduct of Russia. While professions of peaceable counsel were made at St. Petersburg, British officers in the interior of Asia were reporting of the appearance of Russian agents, who made large promises of support against Herat, and offered news of a great Russian army on its march. There is no saying what was true, and what was not; but it is too plain that British officers forgot how strong our forces would prove themselves on our own territory, and how much Russia must go through before she could show herself there. A mere glance at the map might have made them ashamed of their panic; and they must have known much more than the map can tell of the difficulties of the march of an army from Russia to the desert below the Gharra; of the snows and the sands, the heats and the frosts, the rocky defiles and the barren plains, which a wearied army must pass, and know to be in their rear, before they could get a sight of our territory and opposing forces. By such panic on the part of British officers, it was decided to save Russia a large part of these dangers, by plunging into them ourselves, in order to meet her half-way.

The ruler of Cabool, Dost Mohammed, in his fear of attack from the Punjaub, applied not only to Russia and Persia for help, but to the governor-general of India. Lord Auckland, in reply, sent Captain Burnes on a commercial mission to Cabool, where he arrived in September 1837, while the Shah of Persia was slowly making his way from his own capital in the direction of Herat. Before his arrival, a Persian agent had settled at Candahar; and the Persian was for ever busy showing the Afghan rulers how much more advantageous the Russian and Persian alliance would be to them than the British. Captain Burnes

represented to his government that he was somewhat coolly treated; and in consequence, he was invested with political attributes not at all contemplated in the first instance. From this moment, Lord Auckland entered upon that course of supposed competition with Russia in the east which led to disasters greater than Russia could ever have inflicted upon us, if we had remained quiet within our own frontier. The ensuing months were spent in efforts of the Russian and British agents to outwit and countermine each other at Cabool. It will be evident that here everything depended on the sincerity of Dost Mohammed and the judgment of Captain Burnes—about both of which different opinions existed at the time. Subsequent events have thrown light on the character of Captain Burnes's mind. The goodness of his heart and of his purposes is not doubted; but it appears that he was confident in pursuing a policy of over-caution, and credulous while following up a track of suspicion. We do not know, and can never know, how far his being possessed with a set of ideas coloured to him the facts before his eyes; nor do we know anything of the worth of his authorities. Our confidence, however, is not increased by the fact that he was vehemently hated by the chiefs. He acted much on reports of private interviews and conversations, as well as written correspondence. Of course he vouched for the goodness of his information; but he was equally confident on that last fatal morning when he sat down to breakfast in his house at Cabool, while his murderers were gathering in the street. He continued to send communications of a 'startling nature,' and Lord Auckland continued to be startled, in apparent blindness to the impracticability, or, to say the least, the extreme wildness of the enterprises imputed to Russia.

Meantime, Herat held out, month after month, against 40,000 men, and 80 pieces of cannon; and its protracted defence was mainly owing to the skill of an English officer, Lieutenant Pottinger, within the walls, in contravention of the skill of Russian officers who directed the siege without. The lapse of time made the defence of Herat of more importance continually, as insults were heaped upon the British more abundantly, and as it became more

evident that the independence of Afghanistan depended on that of Herat, whose former offence against the shah was considered by our envoys to be fully expiated by repeated reasonable offers to treat. In the course of 1838, our envoy in Persia had set out for the Turkish frontier on his way home, and five British ships of war were in the Persian Gulf, having landed troops in the island of Karak; the treaty between Candahar and Persia was made and signed, under the superintendence of a Russian agent, and Captain Burnes had been advised to leave Cabool. It was believed that Dost Mohammed and the Russian agents were tampering with the rulers of Sinde, to induce them to trouble British India through all its western provinces; and it was feared that news had spread up to the mountain-tops of Nepaul, and down the remotest branches of the Ganges, that a great trial of power was taking place between Russia and England at Herat, and would soon be witnessed in the British Indian territories. It is a curious incident in the midst of these alarms, and one which, as it appears, should have brought the alarmists to some reflection, that Herat did not fall. The Persian army, backed by all the power of Russia, as was said, could not take this one city, defended for ten months under the direction of Lieutenant Pottinger. On the 9th of September 1838, the shah broke up his camp, and set forth homewards, having gained no successes, but lost many men, and wasted much treasure. At the same time the Russian government plainly denied, when called to account, having ever dreamed of disturbing our eastern possessions; declared that it had never ceased to protest against the siege of Herat; and that, when the shah persisted in that war, it had stipulated that Herat, if captured, should be annexed to Candahar, that the integrity of Afghanistan might be preserved. Among these contradictory accounts, it has never been settled what was really true; whether the Russians moving about in Afghanistan were political adventurers on their own account, as well as commercial government agents; whether the British agents were justified in their suspicions, or were deceived; and whether Russia was betrayed by her own servants, or foully attempted to betray us. However this was, pre-

parations were already making by the Indian government for the invasion of Afghanistan; and, at the very time, Russia was recalling both her agents, sending to Persia an envoy more acceptable to England, and to Candahar an agent expressly charged to enter upon none but commercial negotiations. With these arrangements, our foreign minister declared himself abundantly satisfied; and it shows how intense and unreasonable was the fear of Russia in some minds at that time, that for this our foreign minister was actually believed by certain persons to be in the interest—even in the pay—of Russia. To most, however, it was enough that Lord Durham first, and Lord Clanricarde afterwards, at St. Petersburg, were satisfied with the declarations of Russia; and Lord Palmerston at home with the explanations of the Russian ambassador; while the Russian agents in the east were changed on our complaint; and, above all, Herat was not taken. But our political agents in India appear still to have been possessed of the idea which led the British so far beyond their own frontier, and the ordinary range of their concerns.

The most decided act of interference in affairs beyond the province of the British was in the governor-general's proclamation of the 11th of October 1838, published to the Bengal division of the army at Simla, on the Jumna. This manifesto relates the particulars of our disagreement with Persia, exhibits the unfriendly dealings of Dost Mohammed of Cabool towards our ally of the Punjaub, Runjeet Singh, and his evident disinclination to have dealings with the British; and declares that, as there could be little hope of tranquillity for our north-western provinces in such a state of things, it was determined to depose the rulers of Cabool and Candahar, who were of a usurping race, and to place Shah Soojah on the throne. It had often been said before this time—and it has been earnestly repeated since—that the way to have peace in India is to send out soldiers, rather than civilians, to be governors-general; and certainly this declaration of war goes far to confirm the saying. It is scarcely conceivable that a great military ruler could have done an act so rash as Lord Auckland did in thus proclaiming war. He was no doubt

wrought upon by military advisers in a way that a military governor-general would not have been; he knew less than a soldier would have done what such a war imports; and no soldier could easily have proved himself less of a statesman than the whole conception of this Afghan war proved its responsible author.

In England, and half over India, people asked who was Shah Soojah? His story was this. The descendants of Ahmed Shah, the founder of the Afghan Empire, were driven out of its eastern portion by means of an able minister of one of them, who, being of another tribe, divided the governments of Cabool, Peshawur, and Candahar, among his brothers, who left only Herat, as has been said, to the old reigning family. The prince whose minister thus encroached upon his power was called Mahmoud; and this Mahmoud had himself deposed his half-brother, who reigned at Cabool. This half-brother was Shah Soojah. Thus, Shah Soojah belonged to the original ruling family; he was deposed by Mahmoud, his half-brother; it was Mahmoud's minister who provided for the expulsion of the family; and it was one of this minister's family, Dost Mohammed, who now ruled at Cabool, and whom Lord Auckland had resolved to depose. It may be mentioned that the usurping family had once set about restoring Shah Soojah to his throne, after his escape from captivity in the Punjaub; but he offended them, and they transferred their nominal favour to his brother Eyoob. But they in fact reigned without interruption—setting aside the claims of even the son of their eldest brother, who died after seeing his fine province of Cashmere annexed to the Punjaub, and Peshawur reduced to the condition of a vassal city; and Balkh incorporated with Bokhara; and the Ameers of Sinde declaring themselves independent. Thus, the Afghan Empire was much weakened at the time when Lord Auckland declared war against it, for the sake of setting up in it a sovereign who would keep the peace with us.

The plan was that the British, Runjeet Singh, and Shah Soojah should co-operate for the objects of all three. The new Afghan ruler was to enter upon his dominion surrounded by his own troops, and supported by the British,

who should retire, and leave the country altogether when the restoration should be fully accomplished. Herat was to be left as it was; and a guaranteed independence was to be offered to the Ameers of Sinde.

These Ameers of Sinde were a family of ten or twelve brothers and cousins, sons of the four Ameers, brothers, who had ruled Sinde in peace with each other. The fathers of the present Ameers had released themselves from their half-yearly tribute to the Afghan rulers; and now, Runjeet Singh was demanding a large tribute. It was from these tributes that Sinde was released by the present treaty. The Ameers were to permit the British to march through their country; and the force from Bombay went up through the heart of it, on the Indus, while some of the Bengal troops crossed the northern portion. The army was, however, so ill treated in the Ameers' country, and the princes were themselves so evidently hostile, that it was necessary to bring a second force from Bombay, to keep Sinde quiet in our rear; and then again, to compel the Ameers to permit us to keep an army permanently in their country, on the west side of the Indus —three of the Ameers paying £30,000 a year for the maintenance of these troops. Thus were our operations and our embarrassments extending, when we had once put our hand over our own frontier; and thus did one act of interference necessitate more. It was for less than two years that Sinde remained even manageably tranquil under this last arrangement.

At the end of November 1838, Runjeet Singh and Lord Auckland met at Ferozpore, the last of our settlements in the north-west, and, of course, the nearest to the Punjaub.

The meeting and greeting of the rulers, their retinues and armies, was a very splendid sight. Sir Alexander (late Captain) Burnes was sent on in advance of the expedition, and the army that followed was much reduced, in consequence of the news having arrived of the retreat of the Shah of Persia to his own dominions. It was believed that, in the present state of affairs, a very easy task lay before the British forces.

The most direct road for the invaders would have been to have crossed the Punjaub from Ferozpore, in the direc-

tion of Peshawur; but, as we have said, the Bombay troops had a troublesome passage through Sinde. In fact, they had to fight their way up, taking cities along their course. The Bengal force therefore went down to the south-west to meet them; and the junction was effected at Shikarpore, within the boundaries of Sinde, near the Afghan frontier. The command of the expedition was given to Sir John Keane, the Bombay commander-in-chief. The meeting was not a very cheering one. Shah Soojah was there, with his troops, who formed the centre of the army. The British forces had suffered much from the fatigues of the way, and yet more from the attacks of the Beloochees, who by no means approved this invasion of the state which adjoined theirs on the north, by means of humbling that which lay on the east. The army was already more reduced than by a great battle. But the worst was before them. It was March; and the heat in the jungles was overpowering, while in the mountain-passes snow drove in the soldiers' faces. The Beloochees were always like a whirlwind in flank and rear—never in front—catching up every straggler, and sweeping off camels, provisions, and baggage. The enemy dammed up the rivers, so as to flood the plains; and the force had to wade, for miles together, between dike and dike, with only the jungle in alternation. The days of their going through the Bolan Pass were great days for the banditti of the region, and for their chief, the holder of the strong fortress of Khelat, who was now negotiating with the British political agent on the one hand, while, on the other, he was sending out his robber force to strip the army in the Bolan Pass. The tents that were left among the rocks and snow, the camels and their loads, were the booty of the Beloochees; and the troops emerged from the Bolan Pass, hungry and destitute; the soldiers put on half-rations, and the camp-followers fighting for the remains of the horses that fell dead upon the road. Shah Soojah's force was reduced from 6000 to 1500 men; and the British officers wrote home that the march had no parallel but in the retreat of the French from Moscow.

Candahar was undefended—its prince having repaired to his brother, Dost Mohammed, at Cabool. The aged Shah

Soojah entered Candahar on the 24th of April, and was there crowned in May, amidst loud expressions of joy, with which the angry people covered their discontent for the present. After a few weeks, spent in recruiting the strength of the army, and collecting provisions, Sir J. Keane proceeded to attack Ghiznee—one of the strongest fortresses of that strongly fortified country. The journey was difficult and tedious; but the siege and storming of Ghiznee were admirably managed. The son of Dost Mohammed was taken prisoner; and the Dost himself, on hearing the news, dispersed his force, and left Cabool to Shah Soojah, who entered it on the 7th of August.

The British now supposed that all was done. Dost Mohammed was known to have fled into Bokhara; new governors were appointed in the place of such chiefs as would not acknowledge the restored sovereign; and the bandit fortress of Khelat was taken by General Willshire. The invaders rejoiced as if there were nothing hollow in this sudden conquest—as if the Dost was not to come back, nor the Ghilzee chiefs to rise, nor Khelat to be taken from us—all of which happened very soon. Sir J. Keane left at Cabool a force much too small for a position so dubious; and while there were too few men, there were far too many women and children. The slightest knowledge of the character of the people ought to have shown the managers of the invasion that this was no place yet for the residence of English ladies and young children, or for thousands of helpless camp-followers hanging about the soldiery, whose utmost efforts might be required at any moment. In the rash confidence which marked the whole series of transactions, Sir Alexander Burnes encouraged any and every body to sit down beside him in Cabool, where he cultivated his garden, wrote gladsome letters to Scotland, and praised the people by whom he was soon to be murdered; and Mr. M'Naghten, appointed political resident, never doubted about settling his wife in the same place; and other officers naturally shared in the confidence of these leaders. No less naturally did the government at home share that confidence; and with a haste which now looks like a satire on the wisdom of the ministry and parliament of the time, honours were lavishly decreed. Mr.

M'Naghten and Colonel Pottinger were made baronets; Sir J. Keane was raised to the peerage, and Lord Auckland was made an earl. By the governor-general's order, the troops were not only well rewarded with pay, but they were to bear on their regimental colours the word 'Afghanistan.' Another bitter satire!

In October, the army returned to India—one portion to Bengal, under Lord Keane; the other, through the Bolan Pass, to the Indus, and thence to Bombay. The very insufficient force left behind was placed under two commands; General Nott having charge of Candahar and the southern region as far as the Bolan Pass; and Colonel Sale the northern, from Ghiznee to Cabool and Jelalabad. The British army had scarcely disappeared before it became plain that Shah Soojah was hated with a hatred too strong for concealment—hated as being as much worse than the British, as a domestic traitor is worse than a foreign foe. He was looked upon as having sold his country to the infidels; and before the year was out, he received intimations that some who had sworn allegiance to him under British compulsion were on the look-out for the Russians, whom they would immediately join. It really seemed as if we had been helping the Russians, instead of raising any barrier against them.

Meantime, it seemed to the alarmists, who managed political affairs in this quarter, as if Russia were really coming to India. She was, in fact, aiming towards the north-west corner of Bokhara, where Khiva extends—a district which lies between the Caspian, Persia, and the Oxus, and whose inhabitants were declared to have incurred the wrath of the Russian government by annoying such of their neighbours as were Russian subjects, exacting tribute from Russian caravans, and interrupting the regular trade of Central Asia. Such, whether true or not, were the allegations of the Russian government. A more prominent charge still, and that which occasioned a formal declaration of war in December 1839, was, that the Khiva people made slaves of all the Russians they could lay their hands on. The fisherman on the Caspian was carried away from his nets, and the travelling-merchant from his goods. Khiva merchants had been detained as prisoners

in Russia, till the slaves should be set free; but only 100 had been restored, while 200 were in course of capture on the shores of the Caspian alone. So the emperor threatened vengeance on Khiva. But the elements were too strong for even the wrath of a czar. The soft-falling snow—silent and persevering—stopped the echoes of his royal thunder, and stifled his complaints, and barred his progress, and buried some of his men and horses, and turned back the rest. Little Khiva defied great Russia, as little Circassia had long been doing. Here was another lesson for us on our haste in making war for the sake of future peace; on our rashness in invading neighbours as a precaution against a far-distant enemy, who might never be able to get at us, even if he wished it. He would certainly not come down upon us through Khiva. And now, our experience of army-travelling in Afghanistan might well abate our apprehension that Russia could meet us in the field, after a prodigious journey, of which such a country as this was the last stage.

In 1840, Khelat was taken from us again; the little garrisons and detachments scattered through the country were harassed by the incessant watchfulness rendered necessary by the hostility of the tribes in their neighbourhood; Colonel Sir Robert Sale found that treaties and agreements with the chiefs of the mountain-district of Kohistan, which was under his charge, were absolutely vain—the inhabitants thinking bad faith a virtue in such a cause. They harboured the Dost, and played tricks for him, and fought with him; but the gallant Sale put them down—finally, as everybody thought, on the 2nd of November—little dreaming what was to happen on that day twelve months. Dost Mohammed walked through the British camp, with a single follower, actually unobserved, entered Cabool, and surrendered himself. He was sent to Calcutta, and finally permitted to settle at Loodianah, at the extremity of our territory, and on the frontier of the Punjaub. He was a captive whom it gratified the complacency of the authorities to receive and have under their eyes; for, the more doubtful a policy, the more precious are its incidental fruits. Dost Mohammed had polite and cheerful manners; and he was entertained with delighted

hospitality. London people heard of him at the time as being at the governor-general's parties, and playing chess with the governor-general's sister. As he was fingering the pieces, no one knew better than he what a game was meditated, and actually begun in his own home beyond the Punjaub—what checks and overthrow were prepared for those who were smiling upon him as the pledge of their being sure of their game.

In April 1841, Major-general Elphinstone assumed the command of the troops in Afghanistan. This officer had won reputation in the Peninsular war; but he was now old, in bad health, and, as soon appeared, so weakened in mind as to be unfit for any military duty whatever. In May, Major Pottinger arrived from Calcutta, having been appointed political agent for Kohistan. The moment he arrived, he saw—and said in proper quarters—that the force left was altogether insufficient for the need; and that it was necessary to prepare for risings of the Ghilzee chiefs at any moment. Sir William M'Naghten, usually as sanguine as his comrades, admitted that there might be some truth in this—Lord Auckland having forced upon him a reduction of the allowances to the chiefs, at the very moment when their good-will was most indispensable. The enmity of the Ghilzees had been, in fact, exasperated beyond hope of accommodation, by a mistake committed a few months before, when a British officer had slaughtered a small garrison friendly to the shah, on the supposition of their being foes. A chief was among the victims, to avenge whom 5000 Ghilzees took up arms; and during the first months of 1841, they were watching only for an opportunity.

During this season of suspense, there were changes going on behind them which would have materially altered the position and prospects of the British at Cabool, if a speedy fate had not been preparing for them on the spot. The Punjaub was in a hopeless state of disturbance. Runjeet Singh, 'our faithful and highly valued ally,' as the government proclamation styled him, had died; and the two next heirs were already snatched away—in the course of a few months. The new rajah was believed to have been poisoned. His son and successor, returning

from the funeral, was struck by a beam which fell from a gateway upon his elephant, and died in a few hours, at the age of twenty-two. The disputes about the succession which now took place between the widow of the elder deceased rajah and an illegitimate son of Runjeet Singh, let loose all the passions of the turbulent Sikhs; and the Punjaub could no longer be regarded as a friendly and safe country, immediately in the rear of the Cabool force, into which they might retreat if pressed by misfortune. Another event of material importance was the recall of Lord Auckland by the new government at home, who sent out Lord Ellenborough in his stead. How far the invasion of Afghanistan would be sanctioned and supported by the new governor-general, would soon appear. Meantime, those who approved the late policy were sorry that the ruler who was responsible for it was withdrawn; while those who saw in this policy the operation of irresponsible military counsels through the inexperience and ignorance of a civil ruler, were sorry that another civilian was sent out instead of one of our great soldiers, who might not only look to the proper conduct of our new war, but, from his experience of the evils of war, might save us from going further in our course of aggression in Asia.

It was an anxious summer for the British at Cabool. They were living in cantonments near the city. Their position was so arranged as that they were a mile and a half from the citadel—the Bala Hissar—where Shah Soojah resided; and a river lay between; all the four corners of the cantonments, where there were defences, were commanded by hills or Afghan forts; and their provisions were actually stored in a fort at some distance from cantonments. General Elphinstone became more and more helpless; and he called in, as his adviser, an officer whose sole thought was to get back to India, and who therefore discouraged every effort to strengthen the position of the Cabool force. From the moment that a force knows itself to be ill commanded, its heart and soul die out; and so it was now. The officers grew moody and disheartened, as they saw their situation becoming dangerous, while it seemed too plain that they would neither be allowed to prepare for defence now, nor to fight hereafter. The men

were worn and weary with incessant watching, with bearing the insults of the natives, and with receiving frequent tidings of their comrades being picked off by roving enemies, as often as opportunity offered. The ladies occupied themselves with their gardens, which, in that temperate climate, rewarded all the pains taken. Sir Alexander Burnes gloried in his, which was attached to his house in the city; and during these last months of his life, he was as confident and gay as ever. He had real friends among the Afghans; and these friends warned him again and again of danger—told him that he was deceived, that the ground was mined beneath his feet, and that he must save himself now or not at all. He did not believe a word of it. He kept his fears for Russia, and was perfectly satisfied about Afghanistan. The envoy, Sir William M'Naghten, was less happy. One of the last things he said—in the next December—was, that a thousand deaths were better than the hell of suspense he had lived in for six weeks; and already he was having some foretaste of that bitter suffering. The aged Shah Soojah could do nothing. He was merely a puppet-prince set up by us, in the absence of any real call to the throne. He remained retired in the Bala Hissar, hated by the people, and pitied by the British for his contemptible position—some few, the while, strongly doubting his fidelity. We find throughout the narratives of this war a painful suggestion thrown in here and there, that this or that incident makes for or against the supposition of Shah Soojah's fidelity. For some months there was hope that General Nott was coming on from Candahar, with a clear head upon his shoulders, a cheerful spirit in his breast, and a well-disciplined force at his heels. But he did not appear; and then it became known that he could not come at all at present. He had quite enough on his hands below. Early in September, there were small treasons and skirmishes in the mountains north of Cabool, when parties were out collecting the revenue. Later in September, Major Pottinger came to Cabool with fresh information, which so far convinced Sir William M'Naghten of the probability of a rising in Kohistan, that he resolved to detain as hostages the sons of the great chiefs. Early in October, the second son of Dost Mo-

hammed—that Akber Khan in whose hand the fate of the British in Afghanistan was henceforth to lie—came down from the north, and posted himself in the Khoord Cabool Pass, ten miles from the city; that pass being the only way back to Hindostan. General Sale, who would have been in his winter-quarters at Jelalabad before this, but for the treasons and skirmishes in the mountains, now set forth, to clear this pass. His troops might force it, but they could not clear it. The foe was perched on the rocks, where no guns could be brought to bear upon them; and the British had to run the gauntlet through the whole pass. General Sale was himself wounded.

Akber Khan now had command of the British communications. It is piteous to read of the suspense at the cantonments after this. There were rumours of battles, with great slaughter of the British on the road to Jelalabad, and no letters came to clear up the matter. Sometimes, a messenger arrived, but he only brought newspapers—not a written line for even the general. Sometimes, a letter or two came with a forged seal—sometimes a letter which itself appeared to be forged. On the 31st of October, 'no despatches for the general,' nor private letters; but further accounts hoped for to-morrow. On that morrow, 'no letters from camp, which has caused both surprise and anxiety.' This was an easy foretaste of the horrors of the next day—November 2. On this night, once more and for the last time, Sir Alexander Burnes's Afghan friends came to him with warnings; and this once more in vain. He was as confident as ever. The next morning, while he and his brother and Captain Broadfoot were at breakfast, the street filled, and the cries of the crowd told too well what they came for. Burnes was sure it was only a riot, and sprang into the balcony to address the people. The enemy burst in. Broadfoot killed six with his own hand before he fell. All three were murdered on the spot, though Shah Soojah sent word, some hours after, to Sir W. M'Naghten that all was well with Burnes. Shah Soojah also said that if the rebellion was not over that night, he would burn the city the next day; but he neither did that nor anything else, but order the guns of the citadel to fire—which they did all day, without any apparent effect.

For two months after this, all was unmitigated wretchedness. General Sale was hoped for—looked for—but he did not come. He could not; and his wife and comrades were told it was because his soldiers had forsaken him. General Nott never came—also because he still could not. Ammunition failed; and, what was if possible worse, food failed. The commissariat fort, which stood detached, as has been said, was taken, through sheer inertness and mismanagement of the authorities. There had been three possible courses for the British—to go back to India; to remain in cantonments, in a state of defence, till aid should arrive; or to go to the Bala Hissar, and crowd in there, sacrificing the horses, but securing human life at least, till reinforcements should come. All these were difficult and dangerous, and each entailed great sacrifices; but a vigorous adoption of any one would have left some chance to somebody. But there was no vigour, no concert—the few who were fit to command, and the many who were ready to act, were paralysed by neglect and prohibitions. The insulting enemy hovered round, and picked off every straggler, and especially all the messengers whom they could hit. Then, there was talk of treaties; and the wretched envoy—the most responsible man, and yet disabled by the imbecility of the general—caught at every false hope thus held out. Rather than endure the daily sight of the perishing force, he went out to treat—even falling into the snare of negotiating an underhand treaty which no man in any but a desperate condition would have believed attainable—and thus losing something of his honour in the eyes of the enemy. He went out to treat, saying to his companions what has been quoted of the horrors of the last six weeks, and was seized by Akber Khan himself, and murdered on the spot. Those who saw the two faces, tell of them as what can never be forgotten: Akber Khan's charged with 'diabolical ferocity'—Sir W. M'Naghten's with 'horror and astonishment.' The Afghans made a plaything of his head, with its green spectacles, and held up one of his severed hands at the prison-window of the officers who had been rescued by the intervention of Afghan chiefs. Captain Trevor, whose wife and seven children were with the force, was murdered

with the envoy. This decisive event happened on the 23rd of December.

The British were now 'advised' by the enemy to go back to India; and they were so nearly starved that they agreed to do so; though some of the officers were still of opinion that they should fight their way for the mile and a half which lay between the cantonments and the citadel, and take refuge there—trusting to the interest of the country-people to supply them with food. They set out, however, some of them knowing that the Afghan chiefs were saying that they would allow only one man to live; that they would cut off his limbs, and set him down at the entrance of the Khyber Pass, with a letter between his teeth warning the British to meddle no more with Afghanistan. Many set forth, believing this boast to be not unreasonable; and it was too true that only one man reached Jelalabad. Those who gave themselves up as prisoners and hostages were saved—such of them as did not die of fever and hardship—but only one man performed the march from Cabool to Jelalabad. The doom of the force was clear at the end of five miles. Four thousand five hundred fighting-men, and twelve thousand camp-followers, besides women and children, set forth from Cabool on the 6th of January. The distance traversed that day was only five miles; yet it was two o'clock in the morning before the last of the force came up. The glare from the burning cantonments was visible to the fugitives as they sat in the snow, and heard what had been the destruction already, and knew what a road lay before them. Officers and soldiers lay dead in the bloody snow, all the way back to Cabool; baggage was abandoned at the very gates of the cantonments; the ladies had only what they wore, and some of them, hurried away or sick, wore only night-clothes. Each day was worse than the last. One lady had her youngest boy snatched from her arms by an Afghan; and another saw her eldest girl put into a sack, and carried off. The camp-followers, whose frost-bitten feet would carry them no further, died by hundreds along the roadside, or crawled in among the rocks, without food or prospect of any. On the fourth day only 270 soldiers were left. On the fifth, the loss altogether was 12,000 out

of 17,000 men. On the sixth day there were but twenty to make a stand against the still tormenting foe. Twelve escaped from a barrier which detained them cruelly long under the enemy's fire; and of these twelve, six dropped before reaching the last town to be passed. Near this town, some peasants offered bread to the remaining six, who were famishing. They stayed a few moments only; but in those few moments the inhabitants were arming. Two were immediately cut down. The other four fled as men may do who have death at their heels, and safety almost within sight; but three of the four were overtaken and slaughtered within four miles of Jelalabad, and Dr. Brydon arrived alone. He was seen from the fort stooping over his jaded pony, evidently wounded—looking as forlorn in his approach as could be imagined. He was supposed to be a messenger, and the gate was opened in readiness to admit him; but his only message was such a one as perhaps no other man has ever had to deliver—that he was the sole remnant of an army. Except the burying of Cambyses' army in the African desert, such a destruction has perhaps never been heard of in the world.

There were more saved, however, than Dr. Brydon knew of. The omnipresent Akber Khan, who had proposed to escort the force to Jelalabad, and then declared that he could not protect them, offered to save the ladies and children if the married and wounded officers were delivered, with their families, into his hands. These prisoners were carried about from fort to fort till the next summer, when they were released in consequence of the advance of fresh British troops. General Elphinstone was among the prisoners. He died—greatly to the relief of all to whom his fame, and the respect due to grey hairs, were dear—in the course of this captivity. His case was clear, and government was saved the pain of calling him to account. Among the captives was the remarkable woman to whom we owe much of our knowledge of the incidents of this terrible history—the wife of General Sale. Her narrative shows her a true soldier, and one of the bravest. If, in reading her narrative, we almost recoil from the hardihood which could sustain itself in that inaction which is often fatal to high courage, we cannot but fervently admire it

in the form of cheerful patience under protracted personal suffering, and inconceivable discomforts. Her husband met her and their widowed daughter, with her newborn infant, and the other prisoners, on the 20th of September 1842, nearly nine months after the march from Cabool. When General Elphinstone wrote to General Sale, at that disastrous time, to leave Jelalabad, and return to India, the general resolved to hold his post at all risks; and it is said that his captive wife urged him by letter to do so, regardless of the consequences to herself. If so, this meeting of the 20th of September might well be a happy one; for General Sale had held his post till relieved on the 16th of April.

Up to the moment of Lord Ellenborough's arrival, in February 1842, Lord Auckland had done everything in his power for the rescue of the force so rashly left in Afghanistan. Troops were sent in abundance; but the difficulty was to get them through the defiles by which the country must be entered. No man yet had ever traversed the Khyber Pass in the face of an enemy—Nadir Shah himself having purchased a passage from the tribes which guard it; but General Pollock now achieved it, with extreme difficulty and risk, and by means of a strong excitement of the valour of the troops. On the 16th of April, the exhausted garrison of Jelalabad saw the reinforcements coming up; and vast was the cheering and firing of cannon. General Sale had done marvels during the intervening months in repairing his wretched fortifications, procuring food, and keeping off the enemy; and when an earthquake overthrew most of his defences in the middle of February, he set to work again with undiminished spirit. The earthquake brought up Akber Khan, who had finished everything elsewhere, and now came to drive out the last of the infidels. He was fought with incessantly till the 7th of April, when the hope of the approach of General Pollock justified a decisive attack on the Afghans. The British triumphed, recovered some of the guns lost by their dead comrades in the winter, and burned Akber's camp. It was in this month of April that General Elphinstone died; and also Shah Soojah. Whether this prince remained faithful to us, or turned treacherous,

is not understood to this day. It is known only that he was murdered near Cabool, in the midst of some dispute about an expedition against Jelalabad. Great confusion ensued upon his death; and the course of affairs is wholly obscure till we see Dost Mohammed once more in power.

Sickness and other difficulties detained the British forces at Jelalabad till the end of August. A great number died, and the rest were not in the best condition for forcing the passes to Cabool. It was done, however, and admirably, and the army encamped, on the 15th of September, on the race-ground of Cabool. The British standard was hoisted on the Bala Hissar. The Kuzzilbashes, before mentioned as of Persian descent, and hostile to Dost Mohammed and his tribe, were our best friends throughout; and it was by their aid that the prisoners were brought back, when actually on their way to hopeless captivity beyond the Oxus. The Kuzzilbash quarter was therefore spared, in the destruction of Cabool; and so was the Bala Hissar. The rest was laid in ruins; and the first part that was blown up was the bazaar, built in the reign of Aurungzebe. General Nott came up from Candahar victorious—though the reinforcements sent to him from Sinde could not reach him, but were actually obliged to turn back after having traversed the Bolan Pass. Ghiznee had fallen from us too, and its name had lost the glory it had had when it gave his honours to Lord Keane. General Nott, after having evacuated Candahar, fought the Afghans near Ghiznee, and beat them; and was ready to attack the fortress, when it was found that the enemy had retired. The city and fortress were immediately and totally destroyed; and General Nott moved on, fighting one more battle by the way, to join the forces already at Cabool.

The new governor-general had meantime, by proclamation, ordered the British forces to evacuate Afghanistan. This proclamation declares it contrary to British policy and ideas to force a sovereign on a reluctant people—a declaration which must have astonished the Afghans; and, adverting to the death of Shah Soojah, promises to recognise any ruler whom the Afghans shall choose, with any prospect of peace for their country. In the beginning of November, the British troops left the country which they should never have

entered, and where some of them finally disgraced our military reputation by acts of rapine and cruelty, in an expedition in Kohistan, which the Afghans themselves could never have surpassed. It was a fitting end of one of the most iniquitous wars on record. The public despatches and private journals of the time speak, in set-terms, of the honour of our arms being avenged, stains wiped out, and so forth; but this is cant. The honour of our arms, among the Asiatic nations as everywhere else, is absolutely implicated with the goodness of our cause. It is questionable whether, in their barbaric view, our cause had ever before been thoroughly bad—indefensible as have been some of our wars there in the eyes of Christian nations. But in this case, we were wholly wrong; and our honour cannot be now—never can be—retrieved in the estimation of the Afghans. For purposes of our own—foolish purposes, as it happens—we invaded their country; forced on them a sovereign whom they hated, and who had actually no party among them; invited aggression from them by our weakness and supineness; melted away under their aggression; and at last poured in upon them with overwhelming forces—blew up their strongholds, razed their cities, hunted their mountain population 'like vermin,' burning, slaying, and ravaging; and then withdrew, giving them leave to place upon the throne the very ruler we had come to depose. We may deceive ourselves with vain-glory about our honour; but, as long as tradition lasts in Afghanistan, our name will be a mark for hatred and scorn. The men are gone who did this—Burnes, M'Naghten, the military advisers who left their bones in the passes beyond the Punjaub, and Lord Auckland himself. But it does not become those at home who were misled by them—it does not become the most irresponsible of us—to forget this great folly and crime, or to attempt to cover it over with cant about the glory of our arms.

When the British force had evacuated Afghanistan, Lord Ellenborough addressed a proclamation to the rulers and peoples of India, which soon became very celebrated. It is always a mistake to address people of another race, and faith, and language than our own, in what is supposed to be their way—to use big metaphors and fervent excla-

mations, and make references in a supposed religious tone to things which to the writer are not holy. We all saw the folly and bad taste of this in Napoleon's proclamations, and never believed that they would go down with the Mohammedans and others to whom they were addressed; and now the governor-general of India made the same mistake at a serious crisis of our affairs in India, when earnestness and simplicity were more than ever necessary in our transactions. The horror excited at home by the apparent sanction given to idolatry in this proclamation, might be exaggerated; but it is certain that affectation, in every way pernicious in so high a functionary, is most eminently so in regard to the most serious of all affairs—matters of religious faith. In 1831, when Shah Soojah wanted aid from Runjeet Singh, the aid was promised on three conditions, one of which was that the sandal-wood gates of the great temple of Juggernaut, which had been carried to Ghiznee, should be restored. The shah refused this condition, while agreeing to the others, in a way which showed the point to be of some importance; but whether political, military, or religious, we know too little of the native mind to be certain. Lord Ellenborough, however, ventured to use, in this proclamation, big words of exultation and congratulation about the gates of the temple of Somnauth being brought back from Ghiznee; and the outcry was great both on the spot and at home —some fearing that the government would appear to patronise idolatry, and others showing how the congratulation insulted one part of the inhabitants while coaxing another. The matter was largely discussed in parliament in the session of 1843; and due attention was paid to other acts of coxcombry which seemed to show at once that Lord Ellenborough, with all his heartiness and good-will, and activity and diligence, had not the sobriety of judgment and dignity of manners indispensable in his position. He fraternised with the military in a way very extraordinary in a civilian, and published his military sympathies, so as to give more offence to one set of men than gratification to another. He made showy progresses; and acted out vehemently his idea of Indian government—a government of coaxing and demonstration, rather than of business-like

gravity and silent energy. The East India directors, who held the opposite idea of government, used their power—a power adverted to so rarely as to have been nearly forgotten—of recalling the governor-general, without the acquiescence of the administration. The ministers admitted in parliament that they had remonstrated strongly against this exercise of the directors' privilege; and it was plain that they were extremely annoyed by it. Though the vote was unanimous, they considered it as great an 'indiscretion' as any known in history. It was certainly a serious matter to bring forward the anomaly of the double authority at home; but all anomalies must come into notice sooner or later; and the question was, whether the present occasion was a sufficient justification. The directors thought it was; the government thought not. As for parliament and the people, they dwelt most on the satisfaction of the recall of Lord Ellenborough. The appointment of his successor was admirable. It united all suffrages of opinion. Sir Henry Hardinge was a soldier, whose military qualifications were indisputable. But he was even better known as a man of a calm, earnest, grave disposition, sound sagacity and conscientious thoughtfulness, excellent habits of business, and most genial and benevolent temper. In him the qualifications of the civil and military ruler seemed to be so singularly united that he appeared to have been in training all his life for the office he was now to fill. It was on the 21st of April 1844, that Sir R. Peel announced in parliament the recall of Lord Ellenborough; and Sir Henry Hardinge arrived in India in the following July.

Sinde had been annexed to our dominions during Lord Ellenborough's term of office. The agreements we had made with the Ameers, at the commencement of our Afghan enterprise, were not likely to last; and by 1842 we find the governor-general threatening one of the older generation of the Ameers with deposition if he did not pay up his tribute, and prove himself faithful to the British. There was reason to suspect the Ameers of correspondence with our enemies; and their tribute had fallen into arrear. Sir Charles Napier, who commanded the troops in Sinde, was authorised by the governor-general to make a new

treaty with the Ameers, by which the British authorities believed that equivalent advantages were secured to the two parties. The Ameers, however, thought otherwise—estimating the privileges of their hunting-grounds along the Indus more highly than the British ruler conceived of when he stipulated that we should have liberty to cut wood for our steamers along the whole line of the river-banks. The treaty was forced upon them; they were irritated; their Beloochee followers were furious, and drove out the resident who had negotiated the treaty and his few followers from their fort, compelling them to take refuge on board a steamer in the river. The attack was made on the 15th of February. The next day, Sir C. Napier went after the Ameers, to see what they were about, and found them encamped with 22,000 men—seven times the amount of his own force. Early in the morning, he brought his small force to bear upon their great army, routed it, and captured all the enemy's artillery and ammunition, their standards, and their camp, with all that it contained. The Ameers yielded up their swords; and after another victory, Sinde was ours. Sir C. Napier has never concealed the fact, however, that his conquest of Sinde was determined on before the attack on the resident, and would have taken place just the same if that had never happened. The battle of Meanee was a great one, valorously and skilfully conducted; and the thanks of parliament were voted to Sir C. Napier and his coadjutors in consideration of it; but we feel no more moral satisfaction in the contemplation of these events, and the thoughts of our new territory, than in considering our Afghan campaign. We have no business in Sinde; and it is a matter for the inhabitants, and not for us, to decide upon, whether they prefer the government of the Ameers, or the 'mild sway' which we recommend to them as that of the British government. Probably the Beloochees know too much of our invasion of Afghanistan, and of the condition in which we left it, to have much belief in the mildness and justice of our sway. Meantime, a residence in Sinde is a sort of purgatory to Anglo-Indians. The people are manifestly hostile, and the soil and atmosphere most unfavourable to health. Mutiny, the most dreaded of all

events in India, was occasioned in 1844, by the mere order to march to Sinde; and a regiment was ignominiously broken up, on account of its refusal.

We have not done yet with these melancholy Indian victories, and the questionable rejoicings over them at home. The people of Gwalior, in the Scindia dominion, in the heart of our north-western possessions, were disturbed and riotous. We were bound by treaty to give aid in such a case, under certain requisitions: we now interfered without such requisition, on the assumption that it would have been made if a young prince had been old enough; and entered the territory, 'not as an enemy, but as a friend to the Maharajah.' We established 'a strong government,' according to British ideas, and were about to depart; but the Mahrattas were not disposed to let us march off so quietly. They challenged us to two great battles, in which the British were victors; and Lord Ellenborough, who was near or on the spot, taking the interest of a strong partisan in the conflict, issued more high-sounding proclamations about the glory of British arms on the plains of Sindia, and the blessings of British intervention within the walls of Gwalior.

One melancholy department of the history of the Russian alarmists in India is the fate of the officers who were employed in anti-Russian missions. Lieutenant Wyburd, a young officer of spirit and enterprise, who was sent on a secret mission to Khiva in 1835, was not heard of again till Colonel Stoddart, as reported by Dr. Wolff, learned at Bokhara that he had been early murdered. Colonel Stoddart himself was sent on a government-mission to Bokhara, and Captain Conolly, in the place of Lieutenant Wyburd, to Khiva and Khokan, with instructions to repair to Bokhara, if sent for by Colonel Stoddart. He was so sent for; and there they were executed together, in July 1843, after long suffering from loathsome imprisonment, and the besetting sense of the precariousness of their life. Those who knew the open-faced, handsome Charles Stoddart, the spirited school-boy, who counted the days till he could begin being a hero, suffered much under the obscure rumours that floated home from time to time—that he was imprisoned in a well, swarming with reptiles; that he

was in high favour, and a professed Mohammedan; that he had been buried alive; that he had been beheaded; that he was still pining in misery. And those who knew the Conolly family now mourn the death of three brothers, at the outset of a career which was full of promise. Arthur, Edward, and John Conolly marched with Sir J. Keane into Afghanistan in 1839. One died of fever, a captive at Cabool, only six weeks before the release of his fellow-prisoners; another was shot through the heart in the storming of a fort in the mountains; and eleven months afterwards, in July 1843, the last remaining one was executed with Colonel Stoddart at Bokhara. These young men were relatives of Sir W. M'Naghten, whose wretched fate has been already before us. The truth was not known, with regard to the Bokhara agents, till 1844, when Dr. Wolff offered his services to go in search of them to Bokhara. From thence he wrote, by order and under the inspection of the khan, an account of the execution of these officers, for such reasons as such a potentate would be likely to give. It appeared that Stoddart had made a temporary and merely verbal profession of Mohammedanism; but that, unable to live under a mask, even in such a place, he had followed it up with an open avowal of his Christian belief. The reports of the miseries of his imprisonment were but too true.

It is a relief to turn from the dreary scenes in the interior of the Asiatic continent to a far brighter one in its Malayan archipelago. In the young days of the existing generation, boys and girls were taught at school that Borneo was the largest island in the world—Australia then being not fully ascertained to be an island. Among the boys so taught might have been James Brooke, whose imagination, as he grew up, dwelt in the Malayan seas. At length, the time came when he found himself sailing in those seas, and thinking what could be done with the piracy there, which so abounds, and is so cruel in its character, as to put a stop to a commerce of extraordinary promise, and to keep the population of the archipelago in a lamentable state of barbarism. James Brooke saw that Borneo produced material for an unlimited commerce: 'Within the same given space there are not to be found

equal mineral and vegetable riches in any land in the world.' He saw that the people, from being barbarous and in a precarious condition as to life and welfare, might be civilised and Christianised. To this enterprise he devoted his life and all his resources. In 1838, he went forth, in a schooner of his own, on a voyage of preliminary exploration. In August 1839, he was well received by the Rajah of Sarawak—on the north-west point of Borneo—this rajah being the uncle and deputy of the Sultan of Borneo. In return for aid against rebels, the rajah offered him the government of Sarawak—thus furnishing him with the opportunity he desired on behalf of his scheme. We next see him Rajah of Sarawak, happy in witnessing the striking improvement of the people under his sway in character and fortunes. The great drawback was the pirates, who swarm in all the intricate passages of those seas. The value of Rajah Brooke was by this time seen; and views began to open upon government and everybody who knew the story, of his importance in our national history, as the discloser of a vast new commerce, and the simple-minded regenerator of barbaric populations. At the close of the Chinese war, the *Dido*, and afterwards the *Samarang*, were ordered forth against the pirates, and broke up several of their strongholds. Mr. Brooke accompanied these expeditions; and in 1845, a further proof in the eyes of the sultan of his credit with the British government was given in his appointment to be the agent of his sovereign in Borneo. The sultan besought our assistance for the further suppression of piracy, and ceded to us the little island of Labuan, not far from the Bornean capital, as a naval station, on the way between India and China. The sultan, however, was as weak and untrustworthy as such potentates are apt to be. He was won over from the British by intrigue, slew those of his relations who were favourable to them, and countenanced the piratical acts of his own subjects. When he was proceeded against with them, in 1846, he fled into the interior of the island, and would not return. The British officers therefore left with the people a statement of the facts of the case, and of the reasons of their conduct, to be shown to the sultan, whenever he should reappear. In

all these proceedings, there has been no pretence of conquest for selfish purposes; and thus far, the presence of the British appears to be a pure blessing to the people of Borneo. Rajah Sir James Brooke has since been in England, receiving honours from queen and people; and he has gone to the east again, unspoiled by homage, and unrelaxing in his energy, to accomplish, as Rajah of Sarawak and governor of Labuan, the objects which he proposed when plain James Brooke, with no other outward resources than his own little schooner, and the means of negotiating for a cargo of antimony. There is more satisfaction in recording an enterprise so innocent in its conduct and so virtuous in its aim, than in making out a long list of Afghan and Sindian victories, with the thanks of sovereign and parliament for a commentary.

CHAPTER V.

Condition and fate of Parties—The Distress—Riots—Rebecca and her Children—Commission of Inquiry—South Wales Turnpike Act—The Court—Alarms—Murder of Mr. Drummond.

When the ministers met parliament in the beginning of 1842, their party strength appeared to be greater than that of any administration for a long course of years. Judging by the numbers in the House of Commons, the invariable preponderance of the Conservative interest in the House of Lords, and the satisfaction throughout the country at the accession of a strong government which understood its work, there was nothing that the minister could not do—no reason why he should not play the dictator—only keeping within the customary forms of ministerial conduct. But there was something at work stronger than party support and national acquiescence. There was something at work inwardly, in the minister's own mind, and outwardly among the elements which create human food, that was about to frustrate all calculations, and break up a state of things which appeared to

have just settled into permanence. The disintegration of parties which some men had foreseen must happen sooner or later, was now presently to begin. The Whig party was gone—never to be revived. There was no general reform section to take its place; but the Anti-Corn-Law League was now so active, and so considerable in the nation's eye, that any one might see that a free-trade party would soon take the lead on the Liberal side. On the other side stood the vast Conservative body—apparently all-powerful, but in fact powerful only precisely so far as it had accepted and assimilated liberal principles. Sir Robert Peel and his immediate coadjutors had accepted and assimilated most of these liberal principles; and in them therefore lay the main strength of the party. When they emerged as Liberals from the Conservative host, the rest had but little force, and scarcely any principle of cohesion. The strongest and most united portion of them came into natural antagonism with the free-trade party, and have struggled on, under perpetual failure, with the title of Protectionists, to this day. The adherents of the minister composed a sort of party, for as long as the discussion of a free-trade policy enabled them to remain separate from the free-traders; but, of course, when the minister had carried his free-trade measures, and taken leave of power, his temporary party could no more maintain an independent existence than a military company, employed on a particular service, can constitute a separate body when the achievement is completed, and they have returned to the main body of the army. To be a Peelite was a most significant position for five years; but when the minister had accomplished his work of free-trade, and retired from power for ever, his staff necessarily dispersed, and no vestige of their separate aggregation remained.

It was a serious thing to be the man by whom the disintegration of parties was to be apparently caused. That such a dissolution should take place, sooner or later, was inevitable—whoever might live or die, or rule or retire; and that it should take place within a certain limit of time or circumstance was a necessary consequence of the peace. When peace was concluded, and when, afterwards, Canning was devoting himself to preserve it, preparation was in

fact made for that dissolution of parties which was now to be attributed solely to the action of Canning's political heir. It is because war is retardation that parties live as long as it lasts. It is because peace is progress that peace is the death-warrant of parties. In a condition of peace, when new questions and progressive policies arise, and arts and inventions flourish which change the condition and relations of whole classes of men, political interests must be subject to renovation, like everything else; and political representatives will band themselves together in new combinations, and old organisations will dissolve. Seen in advance, this reconstitution of parties for express aims appears a good: looked back upon from a far future time, it is clearly seen to be a great good; but at the time, the preliminary dissolution is a grave evil; and it is a serious thing to be the man by whom it is effected. It is a grave evil that the business of the country is ill done, or remains undone, for want of united action in parliament. It is a graver evil that men think ill of each other, as they almost unavoidably do while each is following his own notions, and therefore appearing to be straying wide of any 'principle.' Oppositions of opinion are respectable in the eyes of antagonists while the opposition is single, and has a centre, round which men gather; but men lose their liberality when they see their neighbours, late comrades of their own, wandering into this or that field of opinion, or forming new conjunctions with old opponents. Then imputations fly abroad, not only of intellectual weakness, but of political dishonour. Mutual confidence is gone; and temper and manners follow. Party violence is bad; but it is nothing to the violence which succeeds a dissolution of parties. Grave as are these evils, there is yet a graver. In the interval—usually an interval of years—between the disintegration of old parties and the constitution of new ones, while a tentative or accidental fusion takes place here and there, now and then, which gives way again, and proves that such associations cannot be arbitrarily formed, but must grow out of some living principle—during such an interval, the country is certain to be badly governed. A principled government—a government which had a policy—would inevitably and instantly create parties. The

non-existence of parties is an infallible indication that the government is a desultory and not a principled one; and of all misfortunes that can befall a nation, none can be graver than this. Such a government cannot endure for many years, even in the absence of all organised opposition, and in the enjoyment of that self-confidence and apparent strength which arise from its having all its own way, through the unwillingness of political men to displace it till they are provided with a party and a policy, or their inability to displace it by a merely desultory opposition. But, while it lasts, it is a moral curse. During such a term of rule, the political life of the nation languishes—its vital strength oozes away—its able men lose much of their capability—and the ideal of the people sinks from day to day. Their ideal of the statesman sinks to that of the clerk. Instead of principles and enterprises of progress, they learn to look for mere routine, or ingenuity in expedients. They are like the man who has lapsed from his ideal and purpose of self-perfection, and lets himself drift among the chances of life. Such, being the natural order of events, has been our experience. After the collapse of the Whigs, Sir R. Peel came in, to govern with power, skill, and the wisdom aptest for the time—with realities for his materials, and the faculties within him, the reputation around him, and the fates above him, for his agents. But the most serious part of his work was that which he did not appoint to himself, and which he would no doubt have gladly avoided—that of destroying the power amidst which he dwelt and acted by his own explosive force—scattering his own vast party in fragments which could never reunite. Upon this has followed the remaining disastrous consequence indicated above—the intervention of a ministry which could not have held office under the old existence of parties; and which cannot hold it under any parliamentary organisation yet to succeed. It is necessary to look forward thus far, to understand what Sir R. Peel's position was when he met parliament in February 1842. He then knew no more of his own destiny than others knew. He did not then dream to what an extent he was to be the destroyer of parties by the act of being the achiever of a policy.

The necessity which ordained this destiny for him suspended the utter disintegration of parties, in order to give him all needful provisional supports. There was the free-trade party—strong and conspicuous, but necessarily only provisional, because the free-trade question is exhaustible. When trade is made free in all departments, there is an end. For the same reason the Protectionist party is necessarily a temporary one. It is, from the moment its policy is broken in upon, a mere protesting party, advocating a negation or mere passiveness. The haymaker can protest against a thunder-shower only for a time. When the shower is over, there is no more room for protest. The most clear and serious and significant intimation of a present dissolution and future new constitution of parties arose from that operation of Sir Robert Peel's policy, which must, without leave asked of him or of anybody else, abolish the old antagonism between the landed and commercial interests of our country. From the earliest days, these two interests have been supposed to be antagonistic by their very nature. We have seen how an opportunity was lost, at the time of municipal reform, of reconciling the two interests so far as to bring the rural districts under a government as good and free as that of the towns. We shall see, throughout this final period of our history, how incessantly and completely parliament took it for granted that the landed and commercial interests always must be in opposition, because they always have been. But we shall also see something else. We shall see how the Anti-Corn-Law League demonstrated a unity of interests between the agricultural and manufacturing populations; and how the crowning measures of this period provide for their future union, and therefore for the abolition of those party distinctions which have, through our whole parliamentary history, been founded on their division. By the crowning acts of this period, provision is made for the application of science, skill, and economy in the manufacture of food, just like that which takes place in the manufacture of clothing and utensils. By them, provision is made for a vast increase in the stationary or dwindling agricultural population—an increase which will be the natural consequence of an improved provision

of work and demand for labour, as science and skill augment the productiveness and production of the soil. As this goes on—as the increase of the agricultural population once more competes with that of the manufacturing, and thereby recovers something of its popular dignity; and as both populations see more and more that their interests are identical and not opposite—that they live under the same great natural laws of society, and flourish most as they are equally regarded by the parliamentary laws of Great Britain—there must be less and less discussion of 'the preponderance of the landed interest in parliament'—at least, in the House of Commons; less and less jealousy about class legislation; not only more equality before the law, but more unity under the policy of a future day. There will be then no place for political distinctions on the ground of the opposition between the agricultural and the commercial interests, and whatever may be the vital principles of parties in that day, they will certainly be something quite unconnected with the old antagonism which received its death-sentence in the repeal of the corn-laws.

A little party arose during this period which would, if it could, have protracted this antagonism—both directly, by its agricultural predilections, and indirectly, by perpetuating a social state which had reached its term, or even reviving one which had passed away. No one could wonder that when the great 'stream of tendency' was showing its full rapidity, there were many who, rather than trust themselves to it, put back into some little cove, not only to protest at leisure against the sweeping tide, but to gather together on the banks sticks and straws, and meadow-garlands, to make and deck a weir. This was natural, and men did not wonder at it; but it could not be successful; and the 'Young England' party therefore did not enable the landed interest to retain its special protection and ancient prerogative for a single hour. The idea of the Young England party, in regard to the condition of the people, was that all would be well if the ancient relation between the rich and the poor could be restored—if the rich could, as formerly, take charge of the poor with a protecting benevolence, and the poor depend upon the

rich in a spirit of trust and obedience. What the Tractarian priesthood were at this time requiring of their flocks, the 'Young England' politicians were striving for with the working-classes; and the spectacle was seen of Sunday sports encouraged, as in the old Catholic times; and popular festivals revived, at which young lords and members of parliament pulled off their coats, to play cricket with the labourers, or moved about among the crowd in the park or on the green, in the style of the feudal superior of old. This was amiable and well intended; but it did not avail in the face of the stern truth that the great natural laws of society have dissolved the old relations between the endowed and the working-classes, and brought up a wholly new order of affairs. The landed proprietor is no longer the social parent of the population on his estates—bound to supply them with a certain quantity of food and clothing, and empowered to command a certain amount of labour in return; and much less is the town capitalist responsible for the maintenance of his neighbours. The theory of society now is that the labouring classes are as independent as any others; that their labour is their own disposable property, by which they may make their subsistence in any way that they may think best. At the time we speak of, there were two obstacles in the way of the happy realisation of this theory, neither of which was recognised by the Young England gentry: one was, that bread and other ordinary provisions were taxed, and the supply of corn restricted by pernicious laws; the other was that, owing to want of educational enlightenment and training on the part of the working-classes, they brought an undue number to share the wages of labour, so that most or all had too little; and thus their theoretical independence vanished under the pressure of actual want. We shall see how the first obstacle was removed during the period under notice; and we shall see how some attempts to advance the education of the people were frustrated, about the same time. Meanwhile, nothing can be clearer than that the view of the Young England party was fallacious, in as far as it proposed to improve substantially the condition of the people. It was beneficial and engaging to see the more educated take an interest in

the advancement of the less educated—to see men of pleasure brightening the rare holidays of the men of toil; but it was merely pernicious to hold out false hopes to the suffering, from an impracticable notion of restoring old conditions of protection and dependence, when the one essential thing that it is now necessary for the working-classes to understand is, that, food and labour being released from legal restriction, their condition is in their own hands. As truly as the Reformation took men from under the dictation of the priests, and gave every man's conscience into his own charge, had the growing up of manufactures in our country taken the working-classes from under the no longer practicable protection of the landed and moneyed capitalists, and compelled them to protect themselves or perish. If they have enlightenment enough to see and rule their own destiny, they are raised to a condition far above that of the serf-like working-men of old. If they have not that enlightenment, they perish. In this critical period of the history of their class, they were deriving no effectual help from the Young England party of their friends. As for the parliamentary action of the Young Englanders, it was in accordance with the hustings declaration of one of them—Mr. Smythe, the member for Canterbury—that the principles advocated by the 'old Tory party' of a century back were still the soundest principles of government.

Serious as was the task of the minister in every view, the most immediate sympathy was felt for him on account of the fearful state of the people. The distress had now so deepened in the manufacturing districts as to render it clearly inevitable that many must die, and a multitude be lowered to a state of sickness and irritability from want of food; while there seemed no chance of any member of the manufacturing classes coming out of the struggle at last with a vestige of property, wherewith to begin the world again. The pressure had long extended beyond the interests first affected; and, when the new ministry came into power, there seemed to be no class that was not threatened with ruin. In Carlisle, the committee of inquiry reported that a fourth of the population was in a state bordering on starvation—actually certain to die of

famine, unless relieved by extraordinary exertions. In the woollen districts of Wiltshire, the allowance to the independent labourer was not two-thirds of the *minimum* in the workhouse; and the large existing population consumed only a fourth of the bread and meat required by the much smaller population of 1820. In Stockport, more than half the master-spinners had failed before the close of 1842; dwelling-houses, to the number of 3000, were shut up; and the occupiers of many hundreds more were unable to pay rates at all. Five thousand persons were walking the streets in compulsory idleness; and the Burnley guardians wrote to the secretary of state that the distress was far beyond their management; so that a government commissioner and government funds were sent down without delay. At a meeting at Manchester, where humble shopkeepers were the speakers, anecdotes were related which told more than declamation. Rent-collectors were afraid to meet their principals, as no money could be collected. Provision-dealers were subject to incursions from a wolfish man, prowling for food for his children, or from a half-frantic woman with her dying baby at her breast; or from parties of ten or a dozen desperate wretches, who were levying contributions along the street. The linendraper told how new clothes had become out of the question among his customers, and they bought only remnants and patches, to mend the old ones. The baker was more and more surprised at the number of people who bought half-pennyworths of bread. A provision-dealer used to throw away outside scraps of bacon; but now, respectable customers of twenty years' standing bought them in pennyworths, to moisten their potatoes. These shopkeepers contemplated nothing but ruin, from the impoverished condition of their customers. While rates were increasing beyond all precedent, their trade was only one-half or one-third, or even one-tenth, what it had been three years before. In that neighbourhood, a gentleman who had retired from business in 1833, leaving a property worth £60,000 to his sons, and who had, early in the distress, become security for them, was showing the works, for the benefit of the creditors, at a salary of £1 a week. In families where the father had hitherto

earned £2 per week, and laid by a portion weekly, and where all was now gone but the sacks of shavings they slept on, exertions were made to get 'blue milk' for the children to moisten their oatmeal with; but soon they could have it only on alternate days; and soon water must do. At Leeds, the pauper stone-heap amounted to 150,000 tons; and the guardians offered the paupers 6*s.* per week for doing nothing, rather than 7*s.* 6*d.* per week for stone-breaking. The millwrights and other trades were offering a premium on emigration, to induce their 'hands' to go away. At Hinckley, one-third of the inhabitants were paupers; more than a fifth of the houses stood empty; and there was not work enough in the place to employ properly one-third of the weavers. In Dorsetshire, a man and his wife had for wages 2*s.* 6*d.* per week and three loaves; and the ablest labourers had 6*s.* or 7*s.* In Wiltshire, the poor peasants held open-air meetings after work—which was necessarily after dark. There, by the light of one or two flaring tallow-candles, the man or the woman who had a story to tell stood on a chair, and related how their children were fed and clothed in old times—poorly enough, but still, so as to keep body and soul together; and now, how they could nohow manage to do it. The bare details of the ages of their children, and what the little things could do, and of the prices of bacon and bread, and calico and coals, had more pathos in them than any oratory heard elsewhere.

As for how this misery was borne—it was, on the whole, endured with an incredible and inexplicable patience. The most comforting truth yielded by this dreadful trial was that large numbers of the manufacturing class of labourers had learned thoroughly something that it much concerned them to know—that there was no such thing in existence as an unlimited wages fund which was intercepted by the cruelty of capitalists. The great majority of Lancashire operatives showed, for instance, that they knew that their employers were sinking into ruin, and had nothing to give, but out of their dwindling capital. But hunger is maddening—not only by the bitter thoughts that it calls up, but by the actual irritation of the brain that it causes; and among the hundreds of thousands of

famishing men, and women, and children, some disorder and rebellion could not but arise. Owing to the incomparable management of the home secretary, Sir James Graham, the evil and danger were reduced to the smallest possible amount; but there was enough to keep the ministry in a state of perpetual anxiety, and to make the queen's heart sink within her, in the security of her palace. What the larger measures of the government were, we shall presently see. From the home-office information the most extensive and accurate was gathered; aid was administered, where it could really avail, with the utmost quietness; preparation was made for the instant repression of violence where it was likely to arise; and the proper distinction was made between those who suffered the most severely and patiently, and those Chartists who were, at this time, very troublesome. They had got into the hands of Protectionist guides or agents, and broke in upon free-trade meetings, and denounced free-trade in corn, and stirred up precisely those among the working-classes who were suffering least—the pitmen of the coal districts, and the Welsh miners. There were riots of nailers and miners at Dudley and Stourbridge, and tumult over the whole district, requiring the active services of the military. The rioters resisted a reduction of wages, and hustled some of the masters; as did other rioters in Wales, where a gentleman of property had a narrow escape with his life. In the Potteries, a force of 6000 malcontents, spread over an extent of seven miles, and occasionally committing violence on recusant masters or men, kept Staffordshire in alarm. Troops were encamped on the Pottery race-course, and magistrates tried to conciliate and mediate; but with little effect. In Manchester, the influx of malcontents became alarming in August 1842. Mills were stopped, and, in some, the windows broken, and machinery injured. The Riot Act was read four times in one day, and prisoners were taken by scores at once. A large attendance of military was necessary, as there were threats of tearing up the railways, and cutting the gas-pipes. At one time, all the chief manufacturing towns in the district seemed to be in the hands of the mob. Presently a royal proclamation came from London, and troops from London and

from Ireland; and then it appeared that Chartists from a distance were at the bottom of the disturbances. It was well understood afterwards that these risings were a great affliction to the best informed of the suffering operatives, who were aware that their misery had no immediately political origin, and could not be remedied by political movements.

The rioters sent bodies of their men to the Yorkshire towns; and sometimes letters—laconic and significant—detailing progress, and one ending with: 'We get plenty to eat; the shops are open; they give us what we want.' Some disturbances ensued; but nothing so formidable as in Lancashire, and in the Potteries, where now the malcontents were gutting and burning dwelling-houses. In the midst of their violence, they gave a lame clergyman 'ten minutes' law' to walk away, but refused the entreaties of a lady that they would spare the house, leaving her to be thankful for personal safety. Three men were shot dead by the soldiery at Burslem, and several wounded. Lady Peel was assured by an anonymous correspondent that Drayton Manor would be burned down. A guard was procured; but no attack was made. A clergyman at Leeds was warned by approaching rioters that they meant to sleep in his church on a certain night; he intimated his intention of preaching to them all night, and they did not appear. In a very short time, the Chartist strangers —men whom nobody knew, dropping in from a distance— showed a depth of design and an extent of rapacity which disgusted the Lancashire operatives; and the disorder subsided gradually through the last weeks of August and the beginning of September.

To these succeeded the strangest series of riots that has occurred in our time. This was a season for teaching the mischievous lesson, that insurrectionary violence would obtain redress of grievances to which no other method of complaint could draw attention. Urgent complaints had long been made by the inhabitants of the rural districts of Wales of their road-taxes. After having paid rates, they had again to pay heavy tolls on the by-roads—so heavy as sometimes to absorb the profit of the small produce the humble farmers were carrying to market, and to make

their manure more costly than it was worth. In 1839, a particularly unpopular set of gates, which the people believed to be illegally erected, were pulled down, on the borders of Caermarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. The magistrates declared their intention of overruling the trustees about the re-erection of these gates; some of them became trustees for the purpose, and the gates were never put up again. This victory dwelt on the minds of the rude and primitive people of the district, who had notions of their own, knew little of the world outside, and spoke nothing but Welsh. They held meetings in by-corners, or remote places of their wild district, and organised their remarkable conspiracy. They resolved to destroy all gates and toll-houses that they considered objectionable, and to persist till the trustees could not afford to put up any more. Their first enterprise had been a sort of frolic—the gates having been pulled down in open day by a mob with uncovered faces. They would be more serious and cautious henceforth. Out of the many texts of Scripture which mention a gate—the oriental gate whose significance was not dreamed of by these simple Welshmen—they chose Gen. xxiv. 60: 'And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.' They chose a chief, dressed him in woman's clothes, put a large disguising-bonnet on his head, and named him Rebecca, calling his followers Rebecca's daughters. The Rebecca, stalking about in petticoats, or riding astride with streaming cloak or shawl, was so ubiquitous, that there could be little doubt of the name being given to any leader of an expedition against the gates. In the winter of 1842 and 1843, Rebecca and her daughters began their work; and that winter will never be forgotten while tradition endures in Wales. By day, all was quiet enough. The most vigilant of the constabulary could see nothing but the ordinary sights of the roads and fields—no groups in consultation, no mysterious looks—nothing but jogging riders who duly paid their tolls, and people about their proper business in their fields or their home. If there was a suspicion of an intended attack on any particular gate, that gate was sure to be left in peace; and while it was watched, half a dozen were levelled at some opposite point

of the country—in one case, within a quarter of a mile of the assembled magistrates. If the toll-keepers looked out apprehensively, they were sure not to see any approaching light or other token. If they went outside to listen, nobody came near. But, when they were forgetful or asleep, they were roused by the blare of a multitude of cow-horns, and the popping of a dozen guns; their door was burst open, and they saw a crowd, some on horses, and some on foot—some in women's clothes, and others with veiled faces—with the flaring torches, and the glittering saws and hatchets. The toll-takers must move out their furniture or lose it; and strong hands helped to carry bed and table and utensils into the field or the dry ditch, while others were sawing off the gate-posts close to the ground, and chopping up the gate. Then off came the roof of the toll-house, and down came the walls, and up came the flags of the very floor; the road was made clear for passengers; and then the uncouth creatures leaped on their horses again, hallooed, blew their horns, fired their guns, and galloped off to some distant point, which they would approach in dead stillness, as in this case. The toll-taker and his wife usually found themselves left alone under the stars in a very few minutes after their first start in bed, or by their warm fireside. Latterly, it was usual for the soldiers to come galloping up, as soon as Rebecca and her children were completely out of sight and hearing. After an instant's pause, to learn which way the rioters were gone, the soldiers would be off at full speed, arriving perhaps to find another toll-keeper and his wife under the stars, and Rebecca just out of sight again. Or, more probably, they missed their way; for the peasantry competed with each other in misdirecting the dragoons. Thus, in the county of Caermarthen, nearly eighty gates were destroyed; and in Pembrokeshire and Cardiganshire few remained. Those few were the old-established gates, which were not meddled with. Those which were most zealously destroyed were the new gates put up on by-roads leading to lime-kilns. The small farmers burned their own lime for manure; and since the new contractors for the tolls had insisted on putting up gates on the way to the kilns, the farmers had to pay 1s. for their load of stone, another for their load of

coal, and again another for their lime when they brought it away from the kiln. Their little farming could not be made to answer in this way. For some time this seemed to be all, and probably was all, that was comprehended in the movement.

But when risings were taking place elsewhere, Chartist agitators went into South Wales, to see whether they could not make comrades of Rebecca and her children. The aspect of the movement presently changed. The police were surrounded and disarmed, and in one case marched to a magistrate's house, and compelled to pull down a wall. Threatening letters were distributed, declaring that Rebecca meant to abolish justice-fees and tithes, and to pull down the workhouses, and to compel a reduction of rents. The alarmed and perplexed magistrates besought aid from government; and a strong body of troops, and another of police, were sent down. But both troops and police were baffled at every turn. Magistrates' houses were fired into; and Caermarthen workhouse was half-destroyed, precisely according to previous threats. The mob marched into the town, to the number of some thousands, the flaunting Rebecca being conspicuous among them. Among the insignia carried were brooms, wherewith to sweep the foundations of the workhouses and toll-houses. The mob had burst the gates, and were gutting the house—the governor clanging the alarm-bell—when the soldiers arrived; two of their horses dropping dead from fatigue. Several hundreds of the rioters were captured, and a few slightly wounded. From the time that the Chartist emissaries directed Rebecca's movements nothing went well with her. At the meetings in the hollows of the hills, the Chartist Toryism came out. One speaker denounced the poor-law, saying it was the proper fruit of the foolish and mischievous Reform Bill; and here, as everywhere else, the Tory-Chartists opposed free-trade, and announced the ruin of all farmers if the corn-laws were repealed. All now went wrong. One night, Rebecca's horse was shot, and her gun was wrested out of her hand. She galloped 100 yards, when her horse fell dead, and in the darkness of the night she escaped; but at last two of her 'children' were captured in the act of

assaulting a toll-house. They were young farm-labourers. The gate was on this occasion saved. This was on the 24th of August. On the 6th of September, Rebecca's horse was again shot—after the destruction of the gate—and six of her followers captured, two of whom were severely wounded. Before the month was out, incendiarism began. A band of armed and disguised men went from farm to farm of an active magistrate, and burned his stacks—being lighted across the fields by the fires they had kindled behind them. Another magistrate, coming home at night, found his stacks burning, the wood full of armed men, and the plugs of his fish-ponds drawn, so that no water could be had. Next came murder. There was a time in the movement when Rebecca was genial, with some little mirth in her mood, and much kindness. In the spring, she had let a toll-house stand, because there was a sick child within. Now, in the autumn, she was grown diabolical—so diabolical, that men lost their manhood under the dread of her enmity. An old woman, above seventy, kept a gate which she knew to be doomed. She had been warned to leave it; and at three in the morning, one Sunday, she was awakened by the burning of her thatch. She ran to a cottage near, to ask the stout fellow who lived there to come and put out the fire: 'There was not much,' she said. He dared not put his head out; but asked her in. She ran back to save her furniture. Rebecca's children came up and fired the thatch again. The old creature called out that she knew them; and they shot her dead. What followed made some people talk of leaving the country, and others of the advantage of martial law. The coroner's jury, privately owning themselves afraid to do their duty, returned a verdict: 'That the deceased died from the effusion of blood into the chest, which occasioned suffocation. But from what cause is to this jury unknown.'

This was not to be borne. A royal proclamation called on all men to do their duty. A special commission was sent down to try the prisoners; and, better than either of these, another commission was appointed to inquire into the grievances of the malcontents. Both commissions were conducted in the best spirit. The addresses of the

judge, Baron Gurney, are like the admonitory rebukes of a parent to children hard driven into fault; and indeed, there was pity in all minds towards the culprits—the opinion of the other commission already getting known—that poverty and hardship were at the bottom of the Rebecca riots. Three men sentenced to transportation issued a penitent admonitory address to their countrymen; and their relations and intimate friends offered themselves for special constables. The light sentences of imprisonment on others of the rioters, and the discharge without trial of many more, were believed to be owing, not only to many pleading guilty, but to an understanding that the peace was to be kept henceforth.

The commission of inquiry held sittings from place to place; and everywhere the inhabitants showed themselves eager to state their grievances. The conclusions of the commissioners were that the hardships under the existing turnpike-system were real and intolerable; and that the outbreak was immediately occasioned by their pressure on the farmers, who were already in difficulties from a succession of bad harvests. From other causes, there was more hardship than usual—the long-continued distress having extended its effects into the remotest corners of the principality. In the next session of parliament, a bill, framed on the report of the commissioners, passed both Houses without controversy; the leading principle of which was the consolidation of turnpike trusts in South Wales. The constitution of the new executive board, and the arrangements for clearing off the debts under the old system, were everywhere approved; and Rebecca's insurrection ended in complete success as to its original objects. While all minds were soothed and pleased by the fine temper shown in the trials, all felt that the utmost leniency was absolutely indispensable, while the government commissioners were discovering the grievances of the people to be real and intolerable, and to have been complained of in vain for many years.

Of the excited state of Scotland during this period of dread and disorder, some account must be given hereafter. And also of Ireland, where O'Connell was triumphing and boasting the more offensively, the more distress and disaster

spread in England and Wales. He avowed the 'sentiment,' that 'England's adversity is Ireland's opportunity.' Opportunity for what? was the question asked by a multitude; but a larger multitude on Irish ground did not think of asking the question. If the demand of O'Connell and Ireland had been for any definable reform, or measure, or grant, long asked and denied, the declaration might have been excusable, like the action of Rebecca and her children. But it was not so; and a subsequent chapter will show the full iniquity of O'Connell's present proceedings, and of the motto which he caused to be heard in the drawing-rooms at Windsor Castle, and under the thatch of the meanest Irish cabin.

And how was it at Windsor and in London during this dreary and tedious season of adversity? When the distress set in, the queen and her court were engaged in a perpetual round of gaieties. Some newspapers, which had a wide circulation among the working-classes, now began the practice of printing in parallel columns the descriptions of fancy dresses at the queen's balls, and accounts of royal purchases, banquets, and pleasures, on the one hand; and the coroner's inquests on starved persons, reports from the distressed districts, returns of mortality, and the like, on the other. The device wrought powerfully; and some portentous symptoms of a new royal unpopularity appeared. It is believed that Sir R. Peel did the duty of a faithful minister; not rousing or augmenting the fears of the queen, but giving the counsel which the time required. In the midst of magnificent preparations for the christening of the Prince of Wales, it is believed that the minister gave the advice to make haste, and to retrench. The King of Prussia presently arrived; the queen and court appeared in Paisley and other home manufactures; and, as soon as the christening was over, a comparative sobriety settled down over the court, and not even the most querulous had any future cause to blame the amount or the nature of the royal expenditure.

In such times it is—if they last long enough to wear our faith and patience—that we see most curiously revealed the 'fears of the brave and follies of the wise.' Accidents always intervene to aggravate the fear; and the

undue fear perverts the wisdom of the wisest. It was during this season that two of the pistol-shots which have been mentioned before were fired at the queen. Both were pranks of ignorant and foolish youths, and appear to have had no immediate connection with the discontents of the time. But they went to enhance the impression of dread; and it was understood that the ladies of the court —and perhaps not only the ladies—were living in a painful state of apprehension of coming evils. While all was gloomiest, in January 1843, an event happened which might almost justify any increase of panic. Sir R. Peel's private secretary, Mr. Edward Drummond, was shot in the street, and died of the wound. It was at first supposed that he was mistaken for the premier; and, in a season such as this, which was manifestly unsettling weak wits, it was some time before Sir R. Peel was considered safe. Two policemen in plain clothes followed him in the streets; and the newspapers, which were all aware of the fact, considerately forbore—all but one—to notice the fact. Mr. Drummond's murderer, however, was proved a lunatic, and lodged for life in an asylum. Yet, there was mischief in the occurrence. Drunken men were heard to threaten the queen and the minister; and infirm brains began to work in that direction, as we see by the police reports of the time.

Something worse than the 'fears of the brave' were 'the follies of the wise.' Grave statesmen, honourable gentlemen, benevolent Christians, began to conceive of conduct in their adversaries, and to utter imputations, which could never have come into their heads at an ordinary time. The Anti-Corn-Law League had not yet had time to win the respect and command the deference which it was soon to enjoy; but it was known to be organised and led by men of station, character, and substance—men of enlarged education, and of that virtuous and decorous conduct which distinguishes the middle class of England. Yet it was believed—believed by men of education, by men in parliament, by men in attendance on the government—that the Anti-Corn-Law League sanctioned assassination, and did not object to carry its aims by means of it. This is, perhaps, the strongest manifestation

of the tribulation of the time. In the midst of it, a strange and mournful scene took place in the House of Commons —a scene which would willingly be forgotten, but that the spirit of history must forget nothing which indicates or affects the course of events. Sir R. Peel was ill, harassed with public anxieties, and deeply wounded in his private feelings, by the murder of his secretary, who was also his intimate friend. Mr. Cobden was then little known—at least, by his opponents. He was known as the chief man of the League; and the League was believed to patronise assassination. In the heat of debate, at two hours past midnight of the 17th of February, the premier charged Mr. Cobden with exposing him to fatal consequences, by declaring him 'personally responsible' for the misery of the people. Mr. Cobden was so confounded by the outrageous charge, and so borne down by the passionate and insulting clamour of the majority of the House, that he could not do himself justice. Some years afterwards, the two great men came to an understanding, and did themselves and one another justice. But that such an incident could have occurred, shows that it was no time for judging the greatest men too strictly. If it was a time when a gaunt workman might be lightly dealt with for snatching a loaf, and a Welsh peasant for sawing off a gate-post, it was also one which bespoke consideration for perplexed and anxious statesmen.

Such was the period that was setting in—such were the storms that were driving up—when the Peel ministry had to come forward with measures of relief for the finances of the country.

CHAPTER VI.

Opening of the Session of 1842—Secession of the Duke of Buckingham—The Queen's Speech—The Corn Question—The Ministerial Scheme—Corn Bill of 1842—Its Reception—Bill becomes Law—Financial Statement—Financial Scheme—Income Tax—New Tariff—Passage of the Bill—Sugar Duties—Domestic View—The Anti-Slavery View—Poor-law Renewal Act—Law of Literary Property—Petitions for an Extension of Copyright—Proposed Bills—Copyright Law of 1842—Election Compromises—Mr. Roebuck—Stewardship of the Chiltern Hundreds—Proceedings in the House—Character of the Session.

The new administration insisted, as we have seen, on taking the recess for the consideration of the financial affairs of the nation, instead of declaring their policy within a month, as the ex-ministers would have taunted them into doing. The present ministers were men of business, disposed and able to make their measures thorough and complete of their kind—fit to be offered to parliament—fit to pass through parliament—fit to work in practice afterwards; and the interval between September and February was short enough for the preparation of such a group of measures as was now to be set up against the debts and distresses of the country. There was much speculation and conjecture as to the purposes of ministers during this interval; but ministers were profoundly secret, and none were further from anticipating what was coming than the heads of the Whig party. At a dinner in London, in November, where all the guests but two were personal friends and adherents of the late ministers, one of the two, who was not a party-man at all, was asked what he supposed Peel and Goulburn would do. The reply was: 'Why, Peel has told you two things which, put together, show you what he means to do. He says he is not going to repeal the corn-laws; and he says he will put an end to our sinking into debt. Therefore, he must be going to lay on an income-tax.' The uproar of ridicule was loud; and the guest was told on all hands that he was talking

nonsense, and that he little knew Peel if he supposed him to have the 'courage' to lay on an income-tax. His answer was: 'You asked my opinion, and you have it. Time will show if I am wrong.' It seems surprising now that so few should have anticipated a positive policy—a set of broad measures, which should be at once remedial and progressive; but too many minds had become weak and superficial about political affairs, under the incapable rule of the Whigs; and those who went into society found little but a vague expectation of some relief from shiftings and changes under the heads of the debt, and some putting on and taking off among the taxes. Meantime, nothing occurred in the way of disclosure till January—a short time before parliament met, when the Duke of Buckingham seceded from the ministry. This was understood as a sign that something was going to be done with the corn-laws that the Duke of Buckingham did not like. The farmers were uneasy. The Whigs were delighted—hoping that there was already a division in the cabinet. The speech was eagerly listened to, at the opening of parliament on the 3rd of February. The numbers who thronged the House of Lords were unusually great, because of the new interest which surrounded the queen after the recent birth of the Prince of Wales, and because the King of Prussia was present, and the ceremony was conducted with unusual splendour; but there was more eagerness still to hear how the appalling distresses of the country would be noticed, and our financial difficulties be met.

In the speech, the recognition of the distress was emphatic; and so was that of 'the exemplary patience and fortitude' of the sufferers. The evil of the annual deficit, now become so familiar, was pointed out as one which must immediately be put an end to; and the tone of decision about this showed that some practical method of recovery was about to be proposed. Parliament was also requested to attend to the laws affecting the importation of corn, and of other articles of foreign production. What 'other articles?' people asked each other, and how many of them? Was there to be an extension of free-trade? Could any considerable sacrifice of import-duties be contemplated at a time when the first consideration

was how to deal with our annual deficit? The debate on the address did not detain men long from the answers to these questions. There was a seriousness and business-like character about the speech, and the demeanour of ministers in meeting parliament, which rebuked captiousness, and put a check upon waste of time in party recrimination. The Whig leaders were more amiable than they had been in the autumn; and some taunting observations from Lord John Russell, easily answered, and a curious piece of abuse of the sliding-scale from Lord Melbourne—as free and easy as if he had never deprecated attacks upon it—were the only hostile manifestations on the part of the Whigs. The address echoed the speech, and passed quickly. The premier gave notice that the budget would be brought forward early. Ministers were ready with it now; but they thought it due to the country to go into the corn question first, with which their remaining measures would be connected, as speedily as possible. The corn question was to come on on the next Wednesday, February 9.

All that day, the avenues to the House were thronged; and the moment the doors were opened, there was a rush which filled the strangers' gallery. As the Horse Guards' clock struck four, the head of a remarkable procession appeared from the Strand. Six hundred anti-corn-law delegates were marching down to the House, where they demanded admission to the lobby, and were refused, on the ground of the obstruction that would thus be caused to the entrance of members. While the members were entering, therefore, the strangers lined the way in Palace-yard, and greeted each member as he passed with a hint or exhortation about the repeal of the corn-laws. They felt their full importance; and it was really great. Already, since the meeting of parliament, 994 petitions for the repeal of the corn-laws had been presented; and these delegates were the representatives of some millions of the queen's best subjects. When they had duly impressed themselves on the passing members, they marched back again up Parliament Street, and, at Privy Gardens, they met Sir R. Peel in his carriage, on his way to the House. He looked very grave; and his countenance did not relax

when he heard the cries all round him for the downfall of the bread-tax. This was an anxious day for the minister —the last great occasion of his speaking from a false position—from too dubious and unsatisfied a mind within, to enable him cheerfully to brave unpopularity without.

He rose to speak about five o'clock. The Duke of Cambridge and many other peers were present, and the House was crowded throughout, and yet particularly still, till towards the close of the speech, when the minister had to ask for the attention of his hearers. There was no confidence in his manner; it was nervous and uneasy. There was no argument in his speech; it was mainly one of clear exposition of the government proposals, and vague deprecation of 'reliance on foreigners' for the food of the nation. He even condescended to the statement that in ordinary years the nation had enough, or nearly enough, of home-grown corn for its consumption, and that it was therefore only on extraordinary occasions that we need to resort to foreigners for any considerable quantity of food. In a little while, he was to see, as clearly as any man, that it was not for him or any one to say when the people had enough, or how long our annual produce would serve our increasing numbers; and that the occasional character of our demand for foreign corn was precisely that which made the commerce an evil instead of a good. But now his mind was entering upon its final transition stage—something of the bitterness of which he had known before. The joy of the agricultural party at finding that they were not to be bereft of their sliding-scale could give him no pleasure in the present state of his mind. The derisive cheers of the opposition were clamorous when it appeared that nothing more was proposed than a reduction of duty, and to make the sliding-scale really slide instead of jumping; and the Whigs were delighted to find that the minister had failed to come up to their own point—of an 8s. fixed duty. Their cheers were caught up by the anti-corn-law crowd without; and the minister, supposed to be the strongest since the peace, found himself almost overwhelmed on the announcement of the first of his schemes.

The ministerial plan proposed to preserve the principle of the corn-duty varying inversely with the price of corn

in the market; and the existing system of averages was to be retained—if for no other reason, because it was the basis of the recent tithe commutation scheme. But some security was provided by changes in the mode and instrumentality of procuring the averages, and yet more by extending the area from which the averages were to be derived. Instead of the 150 towns named in the Corn Bill, many of which were insignificant in comparison with new towns that had risen up, every considerable town which had a corn-market was to be named in the new act, to contribute to the averages. As for the main point—the reduction of duties—much fraud and other evil had been found to arise from the suddenness of the reduction of duty when corn was at the dearest. Thus, when wheat was at 70*s.*, the duty was 13*s.* 8*d.*; and it fell to 10*s.* 8*d.* when wheat was only 1*s.* dearer. Yet worse, when wheat was again 1*s.* dearer, the duty sank 4*s.*, so as to be 6*s.* 8*d.* at 72*s.*, and 2*s.* 8*d.* at 73*s.*; and above that, only 1*s.* The inducement to corn-merchants to hold back corn, in order to enhance its price, and escape all but the lightest duties, was thus very strong; and the injury was great to the government, which lost much duty; to the home-grower, by causing an over-supply in the market precisely when prices reached their highest point; and above all, to the consumer, who had to pay the high prices thus artificially caused. This was the evil to be redressed. In coming to the mode of redress, Sir R. Peel made the agricultural faces in the House very grave by saying that he did not believe it to be for the interest of the farmer that prices should reach higher than the range from 54*s.* to 58*s.* The manufacturing interest were not surprised at his seeing no good in prices being lower than that range; and he made both classes understand that he was as far as possible from supposing that the price of home-grown corn could be fixed, or even indicated, by anything that could be done in parliament. This being understood, it was now proposed that the duty should never exceed 20*s.*, and that this duty should remain till the price of wheat passed 50*s.* When it was 51*s.*, the duty was to be 19*s.* Then it was to be 18*s.*, while the price mounted through 3*s.*—that is, till wheat was at 55*s.*, when the duty would be 17*s.*

This 'rest' in the slide was to be repeated when the price was 66*s.*, and the duty 6*s.* The price must be 69*s.* before the duty sank to 5*s.* Such was the scheme, proposing a very considerable reduction of duties, and of 'protection' to the home-grower; but somewhat easing the reduction by amending in his favour the action of the scale. It was in itself no great matter; it did not touch the vices of the system, or introduce any remedial principle; but it told plainly enough, to all that had ears to hear, that the corn-laws were doomed. The dubious countenances of land-owners in both Houses said so. The shakes of the head at market-tables said so. The embarrassed bearing of the minister said so, to those who saw his position and his course more clearly than he did himself. The cheers of the delegates, outside the House, before assembling to concert new measures of agitation, said so; and, as for the newspapers, some of them said so very plainly.

It was the 7th of April before the bill passed the Commons; and great was the excitement in the interval. The farmers were at first disposed to be as angry as the manufacturers; but they were advised by their friends in both Houses to be quiet, as it was certain that they could get nothing better than this bill by opposition, and they might get something worse. The League called meetings in London, and all the large provincial towns, where the imposition of any tax whatever on food was denounced, and declared to be doomed to extinction. At these meetings, Lord John Russell's proposed policy made no progress. A fixed duty was scouted as emphatically as any movable duty. In some manufacturing towns, Sir R. Peel was burned in effigy. He had gratified nobody, satisfied very few, and offended a vast majority of the nation; so he might well look grave by anticipation, when he met the delegates by his own gate as he was going down to the House.

The first thing the House did was to sanction the principle of the sliding-scale by rejecting Lord John Russell's resolution against it, by a majority of 123 in a House of 575 members, after a debate of four nights. Yet Mr. Villiers brought forward his promised motion against any corn-duty whatever; and this was debated for five

nights more, and lost by a majority of 393 to 90. A scale of duties proposed by Mr. Christopher, as superior to the ministerial one, was rejected in committee by a majority of 306 to 104. Lord Ebrington opposed the second reading on the 8th of March, but was outvoted by a large majority. The debates had now become languid and wearisome. Everybody knew what would be said on all hands, and that the bill could not but pass, after the rejection of Lord John Russell's resolution; and it was a universal relief when the Corn Bill of 1842—the last defiance of the great natural laws of society, in the shape of a sliding-scale of food-duties—was sent up to the other House.

There Lord Melbourne followed the course of Lord John Russell in the Commons—but in his own characteristic manner. He declared that all sound argument, all good sense, all clear reason, all the well-understood interests of mankind, were on the side of free-trade; but that all usage, all prejudices, and nearly all feelings, were in favour of protective duties. He therefore dissented from Lord Brougham's proposed resolutions in favour of a perfectly free trade in corn, and moved a declaration in favour of a fixed duty on its importation. This was negatived by a majority of 117 to 49; and Lord Brougham's, in a thin House, by 87 to 6. Lord Stanhope, on the other, the ultra-Protectionist, side, would have had the bill read that day six months; but the day of his party was over; and the bill became law on the 29th of April.

In the meantime, the all-important statement had been made—the statement of the measures by which ministers proposed to retrieve the financial affairs of the nation, to arrest its course into annually deepening debt, and give a new and healthy stimulus to manufactures and commerce. The statement took the House and the people by surprise—not after the manner which had become a Whig device, but by the breadth and comprehensiveness of the measures proposed. It was remembered that measures proposed by a Peel cabinet were always fit to be carried, as far as their preparation was concerned; so that, if passed at all, they would be passed complete; and men saw their whole prospect when the ministerial proposals were laid before them. It is seldom that so wide and new a prospect

is opened before a people as on the present occasion; and it was indeed time that the most vigorous and effectual efforts were made for the redemption of our sinking state. It was at this date that it became clear that the Chinese war was not over; and our deadly misfortunes in India were beginning to open upon minds at home. Though the East India Company bore the expenses of wars which concerned their own territory, it was impossible to say what might not be the drain upon the national treasury in consequence of the Afghan enterprise.

We have seen something of the daily deepening distress and trouble throughout our own islands; and, of all disheartening things, the minister had to begin his government under a certain deficiency of two millions and a half for the year, and upwards of ten millions for the last six years. The excuse of the Whigs for leaving affairs in this condition was, that they could not help it. They declared that, from this consideration, and a principle of religious submission to misfortunes sent by Providence, their minds were calm, and their consciences clear. Such was their declaration. It is well for the British nation that Sir R. Peel's was somewhat different—in spirit as in terms. Which was the nobler, the more religious, and the more benevolent, the event soon showed. Sir R. Peel's declaration was as follows; and it aided his after-work, by spreading stimulus and hope over the country, and rousing the best spirit of the nation. On the 11th of March it was that, before opening his scheme, he intimated the spirit in which it was prepared.

'No one,' he said, 'can feel more than I do the importance and the extent of the duty that devolves on me. No one can be more conscious than I am how disproportionate are my intellectual powers to the proper performance of my task; but, sir, I should be unworthy of the trust committed to me—I should be unfit to stand here in my place as the minister of the British crown—if I could feel disheartened or discouraged—if I could entertain anything but composure and contentedness of mind—anything, I may say, but that buoyancy and alacrity of spirit which ought to sustain every public man when entering upon the discharge of a great public duty; conscious that

he is actuated by no motives that are not honourable and just, and feeling a deep and intimate conviction that, according to the best conclusion of his imperfect and fallible judgment, that which he intends to propose will be conducive to the welfare, I may say, essential to the prosperity of the country.' So much for his own state of mind. As for that which he confidently anticipated from the nation, his own intimation of what it ought to be, at the conclusion of his speech, was enough to call it into life, if it was not already existing. No History of the Thirty Years' Peace would be complete which did not embody the views of the patriotism of peace, in analogy with that of war, which were this night offered, amidst the deep silence of a listening parliament, by the first minister of the crown:

'I have given you,' said Sir R. Peel, 'a full, an explicit, an unreserved, but, I hope, an unexaggerated statement of the financial embarrassments in which we are placed. There are occasions when a minister of the crown may, consistently with honour and with good policy, pause before he presses upon the legislature the adoption of measures which he believes to be abstractedly right. . . . . But there are occasions, and this is one of them, upon which a government can make no compromise; there are occasions, and this is one of them, upon which it is the bounden duty of a government to give that counsel to the legislature which it believes to be right—to undertake the responsibility of proposing those measures which it believes to be for the public advantage, and to devolve upon the legislature the responsibility of adopting or rejecting those measures. I have performed, on the part of her majesty's government, my duty. I have proposed, with the full weight and authority of the government, that which I believe to be conducive to the public welfare. I now devolve upon you the duty, which properly belongs to you, of maturely considering, and finally deciding on, the adoption or rejection of the measures I propose. We live in an important era of human affairs. There may be a natural tendency to overrate the magnitude of the crisis in which we live, or those particular events with which we are ourselves conversant; but I think it is impossible to deny

that the period in which our lot and the lot of our fathers has been cast—the period which has elapsed since the first outbreak of the first French Revolution—has been one of the most memorable periods that the history of the world will afford. The course which England has pursued during that period will attract for ages to come the contemplation, and, I trust, the admiration, of posterity. That period may be divided into two parts of almost equal duration; a period of twenty-five years of continued conflict—the most momentous which ever engaged the energies of a nation—and twenty-five years, in which most of us have lived, of profound European peace, produced by the sacrifices made during the years of war. There will be a time when those countless millions that are sprung from our loins, occupying many parts of the globe, living under institutions derived from ours, speaking the same language in which we convey our thoughts and feelings—for such will be the ultimate results of our wide-spread colonisation—the time will come when those countless millions will view with pride and admiration the example of constancy and fortitude which our fathers set during the momentous period of war. They will view with admiration our previous achievements by land and sea, our determination to uphold the public credit, and all those qualities by the exhibition of which we were enabled ultimately, by the example we set to foreign nations, to insure the deliverance of Europe. In the review of the period, the conduct of our fathers during the years of war will be brought into close contrast with the conduct of those of us who have lived only during the years of peace. I am now addressing you after the duration of peace for twenty-five years. I am now exhibiting to you the financial difficulties and embarrassments in which you are placed; and my confident hope and belief is that, following the example of those who preceded you, you will look those difficulties in the face, and not refuse to make similar sacrifices to those which your fathers made for the purpose of upholding public credit. You will bear in mind that this is no casual and occasional difficulty. You will bear in mind that there are indications among all the upper classes of society of increased

comfort and enjoyment—of increased prosperity and wealth; and that, concurrently with these indications, there exists a mighty evil which has been growing up for the last seven years, and which you are now called upon to meet. If you have, as I believe you have, the fortitude and constancy of which you have been set the example, you will not consent with folded arms to view the annual growth of this mighty evil. You will not reconcile it to your consciences to hope for relief from diminished taxation. You will not adopt the miserable expedient of adding, during peace, and in the midst of those indications of wealth and of increasing prosperity, to the burdens which posterity will be called upon to bear. You will not permit this evil to gain such gigantic growth as ultimately to place it far beyond your power to check or control. If you do permit this evil to continue, you must expect the severe but just judgment of a reflecting and retrospective posterity. Your conduct will be contrasted with the conduct of your fathers, under difficulties infinitely less pressing than theirs. Your conduct will be contrasted with that of your fathers, who, with a mutiny at the Nore, a rebellion in Ireland, and disaster abroad, yet submitted with buoyant vigour and universal applause—with the funds as low as 52—to a property-tax of 10 per cent. I believe that you will not subject yourselves to an injurious or unworthy contrast. It is my firm belief that you will feel the necessity of preserving inviolate the public credit—that you will not throw away the means of maintaining the public credit by reducing in the most legitimate manner the burden of the public debt. My confident hope and belief is that now, when I devolve the responsibility upon you, you will prove yourselves worthy of your mission—of your mission as the representatives of a mighty people; and that you will not tarnish the fame which it is your duty to cherish as the most glorious inheritance—that you will not impair the character for fortitude, for good faith, which, in proportion as the empire of opinion supersedes and predominates over the empire of physical force, constitutes for every people, but above all for the people of England—I speak of reputation and character—the main instrument by which a powerful

people can repel hostile aggressions, and maintain extended empire.'

The minister continued to do his own part, by a bearing of unflinching firmness and patient courage. On the night of the 11th of March, while the House was waiting for his statement, he had had the painful duty of communicating to it the news of the murder of Sir William M'Naghten, and of the calamities of the Cabool force; and for many nights afterwards, his attendance in the House was a sort of running the gauntlet of inquiries and objections about his scheme, which was too large to be at once comprehended, and too vigorous to be at once estimated by the existing House of Commons.

The scheme was this. Here was a large deficiency to be met, and such a surplus to be provided as would prevent the recurrence of a deficiency. It was too great a need to be met by a tax on a commodity here and a commodity there, at a time when too many commodities were going out of use through the poverty of the people. The appeal must be made directly to property; and the first proposition was of an income-tax, not to exceed 7*d.* in the pound, or nearly 3 per cent., for a limited period. Such a tax, besides filling up the deficit, would yield a surplus that would justify a vast reduction of commercial taxation; and the confident expectation of the minister was, that so much relief would be felt from these reductions—from the improvement in trade and in comfort that must follow—that the payment of the income-tax would be rendered very easy. He believed that when almost the whole mass of commercial duties was removed, the difference to individuals, from the relief, would be worth fully the £2 18*s.* 4*d.* in every £100 of their incomes that the income-tax would take from them. From this tax, all incomes below £150 were to be exempted. This was very well. But it was not so well that income from all sources was to be treated alike; that the receiver of a temporary annuity of £200 from the funds, for instance, should pay £5 16*s.* 8*d.* out of it, in the very last year, while the receiver of £200 per annum from landed property paid only the same sum; and, again, that the professional man—the surgeon or lawyer—who, in the decline of life, was beginning to earn

£1000 per annum, but who had not made a provision for the family who would lose their income at his death, should pay the same amount of tax as the proprietor who would transmit a rental of £1000 to his children. This was regarded at the time, and has been regarded more and more since, as the great imperfection of the ministerial scheme. It was allowed to pass at first, because the tax was proposed as a temporary one; and it was felt that the vast labour and difficulty of making arrangements for the ascertainment of the sources of income and the apportionment of the tax could hardly be got through before the term of its imposition would have arrived. But arrangements should have been made for the prosecution of this task from the moment it was supposed that a renewal of the tax would be necessary. It has been twice renewed, with the entire approbation of the majority of clear-headed and public-spirited men in the country, many of whom would be glad to see it increased to 10 per cent. for the sake of the abolition of all other taxes; and yet nothing is done or promised about proportioning the tax to the saleable value of incomes. After deducting the incomes under £150, which would have yielded a quarter of the whole amount, the impost was expected to afford something above three millions and a half. As for its duration, five years would have been proposed unconditionally, but for the chance of one of those turns of commercial prosperity which might render its continuance unnecessary. It was, therefore, to cease at the end of three years, or go on to five, as parliament should at the time see fit. Ireland was exempted from the tax, not only on account of her poverty, but because, not being subject to assessed taxes, she had no machinery for the collection of this duty; and the consequences of setting up such a machinery, in the existing state of Ireland, required the gravest consideration. It was proposed to levy an equivalent amount of tax in Ireland by increased duties on spirits—the consumption of which was again on the increase, from the decline of the temperance movement—and by equalising the stamp-duties in England and Ireland. Absentees, residing in England from choice and not public duty, would be subject to the income-tax, as English residents. One other measure

for increasing the revenue was proposed—the extension of the 4*s.* duty on the export of coal, hitherto partial, to all exportation of that article. Here would be a revenue, it was supposed, of £4,380,000 from these new sources. After supplying the deficit, what was to be done with the surplus?

It was to be applied in the largest reduction of commercial taxation ever contemplated by cabinet or parliament. Out of 1200 articles subject to customs-duties, 750 were to be reduced. The first principle was, the minister said, to remove prohibition; and the next, to reduce duties on the raw materials of manufactures to 5 per cent. or less. On articles partially manufactured, the duty would now never exceed 12 per cent.; nor, on articles wholly manufactured, 20 per cent. The loss by these 750 reductions would not, he believed, exceed £270,000—a small sum for which to have borne so vexatious a taxation for so long! The new tariff was all ready—divided under twenty heads—laid on the table this Friday night, so as to be read by every tradesman in Great Britain on Monday morning, and talked over in every Monday club. As Sir R. Peel took the document from the hands of Mr. Gladstone, loud cheers arose from every part of the House; and every one probably felt that it was worth waiting through the recess for a hope of rescue like this at the end of it.

The late ministers very properly excused themselves from giving an immediate opinion with regard to a scheme so vast as to require much consideration; and Lord J. Russell satisfied himself with making some small objections which occurred to him at the moment. These gentlemen now found that Sir R. Peel had 'courage' to propose an income-tax; and those who were familiar with their social and domestic intercourses, knew that they were penetrated with admiration at the statesmanship now before them, and that the generosity of the most captious among them was roused for the time, and the evil spirit of jealousy laid asleep. But it was for only too short a time—only for three days or so. Then the evil awoke, as rancorous as ever, and stung the ex-ministers into acts of opposition, which showed most meanly on the broad background of the government policy. When Lord J. Russell, aware of the desperate state of our financial management, asked

in regard to the income-tax: 'What will France say?' it was felt that the meanness of opposition could go no further. The reply of the minister was: 'The noble lord says, "Do not impose the income-tax, because you will show foreign nations that the resources of this country are exhausted." I say, never mind what may be the impression on foreign countries. Do that which you believe to be just, that which you think consistent with sound policy, and let foreign nations think what they will.' Lord John Russell, however, avowing this to be his strongest ground of objection against the tax, declared his determination to oppose it in every stage of discussion—on the resolutions, on the report, the first reading, the second reading, and the third reading. The minister was anxious to have the decision of the House before the Easter holidays; and some of the leading members of the opposition endeavoured to protect him from the abuse of the power of obtaining adjournments; but a small minority baffled them all, and deferred the decisive consideration of the measure till after the 4th of April.

The object was, of course, to rouse popular feeling against the bill. There could hardly be a more promising occasion; for, while every tax is disagreeable, and every heavy tax eminently so, there is something transcendently disgusting in an income-tax, which not only takes a substantial sum immediately out of a man's pocket, but compels him to expose his affairs to a party that he would by no means choose for a confidant. The vexation and grumbling were great at the time, and have been so ever since. In the books at the Bank of England may be seen parenthetical exclamations, such as 'Damn Sir Robert Peel and all his crew!' and the like, so numerous that the bookkeepers found it in vain to oppose such a method of pronouncing on the measure. Merchants old enough to remember the war property-tax anticipated surcharges, and the return of all the injured and angry feelings under which they used to suffer without redress. The young professional man quaked at the necessity he saw before him of either owning himself to be earning less than £150 a year, or paying a tax out of his bare means of bread to keep up his professional credit. There was no lack of

discontent and apprehension; and this the minister surely anticipated; but he anticipated no less confidently, and no less correctly, that the discontent and apprehension would be less powerful than the desire for financial release and security. Men would rather submit to the most disagreeable of taxes than go on as the nation had been doing for the last six years. They responded to the call of the government to rouse themselves to a great effort, to recover a position of safety and honour; and all attempts to excite them to opposition during the Easter recess completely failed. After the House met, there was a debate of four nights on an amendment, condemnatory of the tax, of Lord J. Russell's; but it merely exhibited the fact that the choice lay between an income-tax—including a property-tax—and loans; the last being more eminently than a property-tax a resource proper to war-time, being indeed a disgrace in time of peace. The popular confidence in the new ministry had raised the funds; and some Whig leaders showed what an advantageous time this would be for a loan; and it was this which occasioned the energetic passage of the debate which, greeted with cheers and counter-cheers and laughter in the House, met with the same reception everywhere, and became at once celebrated. 'I call upon you,' said Sir R. Peel, in reply to Lord J. Russell's suggestion of a new loan, 'I call upon you to make great exertion; and the first step you take towards recovery, the first demonstration of your willingness, will be half the victory. If you are afraid to submit to sacrifices; if you paint in glowing colours the miserable condition of those who are to pay taxes; if you say it is better to go on on the present system, increasing the debt a little more, funding at 91—why are the 3 per cents. at 91? Who has made them 91? Public credit is high, the funds have risen, and say you, "You can have a loan easily now!" O you miserable financiers! [Laughter and cheers.] I beg pardon if, in the heat of debate, I have used a word that may give offence. But the funds are high, because you have shown a disposition not to resort to a system of loans in time of peace.' Lord J. Russell's amendment was rejected by a vote of 308 to 202, on the 13th of April; and another amendment, proposing the reading of the bill on that day six months,

was thrown out on the 18th by a vote of 285 to 188. The progress of the bill through committee was rapid. After the rejection of a few amendments, little further opposition was made. Eighty clauses were disposed of on the night of the 2nd of May; and on the 30th of May the third reading was carried by a majority of 130, and the bill passed the Commons. In the Lords, there was no debate till the third reading; and what there was, did not prevent the bill from passing the same evening, by a majority of 71.

The speech which appears to have most truly represented the predominant opinion and sentiment in regard to the income-tax, was that of Mr. Raikes Currie, a member who had been in parliament since 1837, but had hardly opened his lips till now, when he did it to more purpose than anybody else. He avowed that he came into parliament in the hope of aiding in a large and secure extension and protection of the suffrage; but that that hope had been baulked by Lord John Russell's declaration that he considered the Reform Bill a final measure, and that it was by a determinate purpose that the preponderance of the landed interest in parliament was provided for. Under this preponderance of monopolists, all efforts of the Liberal party against monopolies must be hopeless; and especially while, as at present, there was no appearance of popular support of the Whigs. When Lord John Russell had 'slammed the door of the constitution in the face of the unrepresented,' he was surely bound to offer no factious opposition to measures in which liberal principles were embodied. The only hope left was in the carrying of liberal measures by those who had power to carry them. He considered himself at full liberty to consider separately, and in entire independence of party, the measures brought forward which contained any popular promise; and he certainly considered the proposal of the income-tax as full of such promise. He was aware of all the evils of that tax—from those on the surface to those in its depths; but it had the great virtue which could cover even that amount of evils—that it spared the poor, and laid the burden of taxation where it could best be borne. He saw the beginning of a new era in this appeal to the monied classes of the nation to restore the national resources; and, ap-

proving the measure, he felt himself bound over to candour towards its originator. He saw no use in driving the minister—if that were possible—into the arms of ultra-Protectionists by persecution. He remembered that minister's declaration, that he considered the prosperity of the manufacturing classes of more consequence to the landed interest than any protective laws; and he considered this a sufficient ground for giving him fair-play—even if he had not been now the only hope of popular progress. This statement, remarkable and much remarked on at the time, is even more valuable now. It then served as an exposition of a widely spread view, and as a guide to some who were still perplexed what to think and do; but now its political truth is so verified that the speech reads rather as a commentary on Sir R. Peel's course, and the state of parties during his term of office, than as a piece of reflection at the outset. The operation of the income-tax commenced from the 5th of April 1842.

It has been mentioned that a copy of the proposed tariff had been laid before parliament, and printed off for the benefit of the country. This first copy could not be the working one. As the minister explained, it was necessary, in preparing the measure, to avoid communication with persons actually interested in the supposed protection of particular articles; but it was next necessary to allow such persons time and opportunity to state their views on their own behalf. The changes made in consequence of such representations were not such as to occasion much delay; and by the 5th of May, the amended copy of the proposed tariff was on the table of the House. It may be questioned whether any measure connected with finance, brought forward in parliament at any former time, ever caused such deep and glowing satisfaction throughout the educated classes of this country as this new tariff. When it was considered that the minister's business was—not that of the amateur financier, to make out a perfect scheme—but to propose a reform that would work, it was felt that this was the soundest and most remarkable budget ever brought forward; the soundest in its principle, and the most remarkable in its courage and comprehensiveness.

As the income-tax was intended to tax wealth, the new tariff was mainly designed to relieve manufacturing industry. The prospects now opened were very cheering. Owing to the high duties on foreign woods, we had not hitherto been able to keep those woods, and make them into furniture at home, but had been obliged to let them go to France and Germany, to employ the cabinetmakers there, and then to import the furniture. Now, the cabinet-trade was to be so relieved, that there was hope that we might export furniture. The free command of dye-woods, again, was highly important to our manufactures. As for ores, copper had hitherto been smelted in bond, and actually sent away on account of the duties, while we had to import from France and Belgium copper smelted with our own coal. Oils and extracts, indispensable in many manufactures, were made freely accessible by reduction of duty. And above all these benefits was that of the change in the timber-duties. Colonial timber was to be admitted duty-free; and this would enable parliament to diminish the duties on Baltic timber, to the lowest point consistent with good faith towards Canada. The greatest authority on free-trade subjects, Mr. Deacon Hume, had said, that if we had untaxed timber as we had untaxed coal and untaxed iron, we should be provided with the three great primary raw materials of employment and consumption. This we were henceforth to have. We should have better shipbuilding, and more of it. Our fisheries would extend, from the superior character of fishing-boats. The quality of our dwelling-houses, bridges, and utensils of various kinds, could not but be greatly improved.

Among the most interesting of the proposed changes, were those relating to food. The agriculturists would benefit by the introduction of clover and other seeds, which had hitherto paid a high duty. The farmers liked this very well; but they were dreadfully alarmed at what was to be done about cattle, salt-meat, and fish. There was no reason to apprehend that the British nation could be fed in independence of the British farmer and grazier; but it really seemed as if some people thought such a thing might happen. It was well that there were wide differences of opinion on each head. While some feared for our graziers

from the introduction of cattle from the continent, others thought that the graziers would profit largely by the fattening of the lean beasts which would be imported; for there never was a doubt, unhappily, that the consumption of meat in England ought to be very much larger indeed than it had been any time within this century. The consumption of meat was nowhere on the increase in any proportion to the increase of numbers; and in too many localities it was known that meat-eating was becoming confined to a higher and a higher class in society. The minister, for one, therefore, had no apprehension of the ruin of the graziers from the alteration; and he proposed to admit cattle, fresh and salted meat, hams, lard, salmon, and herrings, at duties considerably reduced. The immediate panic, among the ignorant agricultural class, was great; and there were, as usual, adventurers ready to make their market of it. Butchers' meat from Hamburg was advertised at 3*d.* per lb., while the people of Hamburg were themselves paying 6*d.* Numbers of graziers and farmers sold off their cattle for whatever they could get, and said that Sir R. Peel's tariff was ruining them. Every horned head seen on deck, on the arrival of vessels at Hull or Harwich, counted for a dozen to alarmed imaginations; and the pigs reported were innumerable. But these were mistakes sure of speedy correction; and in a few months, some people laughed, and others sighed, on finding how far the supply of animal food fell short of the national want.

The minister found some difficulty in carrying out the true principle of reducing duties to the point which should obviate smuggling. On this principle the duty on straw-plait had been reduced from 17*s.* per lb. to 5*s.*; but the stir made was so great, and apparently so charitable towards the poor women and children in country districts, whose employment was supposed to be at stake, that the point was yielded so far as to raise the 5*s.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* But the minister pointed out the mistake in parliament, producing, to the great amusement of the House, and no doubt of the smuggling portion of society, an ordinary-looking bundle of straw for plaiting, in the centre of which was concealed a small roll of straw-plait, such as it would

still be worth while to smuggle, if the duty was higher than 5*s.* per lb. Some opposition was made to the new duties on swine, and fish, and apples, and butter, and other articles; but large majorities in every case affirmed the government duties. The Whitsuntide holidays had allowed time for consultation and reflection; the panic about the importation of cattle had ceased already, and mutton was again 7*d.* and even 8*d.* per lb.; so that all was fair for carrying the new tariff. The objections of opposition related to the omission of sugar from the tariff reductions, and the treatment of corn, and the difference between the duties on colonial and on foreign productions. The replies were that the reduction of the corn-duties was considerable enough for the present; that the case of sugar was an exceptional one; and that government had done all it could in freeing colonial produce—thus preparing for negotiation about foreign produce, and setting an example of fearless freedom of trade to other countries. On the whole, there was a more general assent than usual to the measure, and less party recrimination. The ex-ministers told of what they had intended to do in the same direction, if they had not been stopped by their failure in the treatment of the first two articles—corn and sugar. Here was the thing done—every one feeling that the corn question was as truly a merely deferred one as the sugar. Both these remained to be dealt with hereafter; and meantime here was a provision for the extension of manufactures and commerce, the increase of food, and such a reduction in the general cost of living as would go far to enable the people to pay their new income-tax, and perhaps compensate for it. Men might differ, and did differ, as to whether this new tariff was valuable only as a move in the right direction, or whether it would also achieve what its authors hoped, in the extension of trade, and the improvement of comfort; but none—unless it were a few bigots in and out of parliament—doubted the Customs Acts reform to be a good thing. One gentleman would have free-trade in everything but herrings; another in everything but straw-plait; and Sir R. Peel and Lord J. Russell in everything but corn; but these separate opinions merged in general satisfaction that, out of 1200 articles that paid customs-

duties, 750 were to be reduced; and a large majority of these to a merely nominal amount. The bill passed the Commons, amidst loud cheering, on the 28th of June.

In the other House, Lord Stanhope prophesied that the measure would be fatal to the power and reputation of the minister who brought it forward, and that we should end by having our navy and many other classes fed by foreigners instead of by British farmers. Lord Colchester thought he might vote for this bill without advocating the general principles of free-trade, and merely as an improvement in customs management. Lord Stanhope laboured hard with amendments in committee, and against the third reading—but in vain; and Lord Radnor was as energetic in opposition, for the reason that the bill did not go far enough. But those two were joined by only seven more on the last decisive occasion, when the bill passed by a vote of 52 to 9, on the 8th of July.

The article of sugar was not passed over this session because it did not stand in the tariff. It had a debate to itself. The subject was becoming a difficult one; and men were growing positive and peremptory as usual, in proportion to the difficulty. No difficulties, in all our mortal experience, are so formidable as those which—the result of wrong-doing—attend the transition from wrong to right doing; and the perplexities about slave-produce were now showing themselves to be in proportion to the moral mistake and offence of slavery. Amidst the never-ending complexities of the subject, and entanglements of the yearly debates, we may single out the two most important aspects of the question, and show how they appeared at this time.

On the one hand, the West India planters urged that their lives had grown up, and their property been employed, under the legal institution of negro slavery, and a system of protective duties on sugar: now, slavery was abolished in their islands, but not in other sugar-producing countries; and they claimed the continuance of high sugar-duties, both as a carrying out of the system under which they had invested their fortunes in the West Indies, and as a necessary condition of their competing with countries where slave-labour was at command. On the other hand,

the friends of the poor in England showed how sugar had become truly a necessary of life, when it was needful for the infants' food in the cottage, and for the temperate man's meal of tea or coffee—which were largely superseding intoxicating drinks—and for the use of many articles of food which could not be eaten without it. They showed the hardship and, as they considered, the iniquity of making the British labourer, who had already paid so much to the planters as compensation for the loss of slave property, now go without sugar, or pay double for it, to bolster up the fortunes which had been invested under a bad system; a system whose badness insured its overthrow. Somebody must suffer—as is always the case where a social sin has been committed; and that somebody ought to be anybody rather than the British labourer. Then, reasons were alleged why it ought to be, and must be, the planter-class that should suffer—that a system requiring high duties cannot, in our age of the world, exist for any length of time; that the withdrawal of protection would compel the planters to better methods of cultivation—to more agricultural skill and improved management; and that, if estates could not be made to answer under such improved methods, they were not worth sustaining at all. This was one aspect of the controversy.

The other related to the condition of the institution of slavery in the world, to our relation to it, and to the effect upon it of our rate of sugar-duty. The controversy here was as to whether we had so pledged ourselves to the cause of human liberty as to make it supersede the interests of our planters in the West Indies, and our labourers at home; whether, in short, it was a case in which we were unreservedly to sacrifice the interests of individuals to the maintenance of a great principle of social morals all over the world. In connection with this was the question whether, as a matter of fact, slavery was restrained by our high sugar-duties and other arrangements, and whether it would be aggravated by admitting free-trade principles into this department of international traffic. On the one hand, it was proved that the slave-trade was constantly on the increase, in spite of all arrangements, if not in consequence of them; and it was argued that the strongest

political ground for the abolition of slavery was the superior value of free over slave labour: while, on the other hand, it was protested, that the peculiarity of the case took it out of the category of free-trade; and that, if slave-grown sugar were admitted to our markets under any duties which would leave it within reach of popular consumption, a great stimulus would be given to slave cultivation, and a new lease of life given to the criminal institution.

From year to year were these opposing views brought forward, and supported by their respective arguments. On the present occasion, the explanations of the government were looked forward to with impatience, from the increased eagerness of the friends of the people that they should have cheap sugar while enjoying so many other relaxations, and because the late ministers insisted on a reduction of the sugar-duties, as next in importance to their 8*s*. corn-duty. On the 3rd of June, the chancellor of the exchequer declared the inability of the government to reduce the sugar-duties that year, well pleased as they would be to do it. To reduce the colonial sugar, and not the foreign, would be to forfeit some revenue without effectually diminishing the cost to the consumer; and there were two objections to reducing the foreign sugar-duty—the loss to the revenue, which would be greater than could be adventured in the same year with the tariff reduction; and the delay of foreign powers in affording a sufficient guarantee against slavery and the slave-trade. An anti-slavery sentiment was springing up in slave-holding communities, and it might be eminently mischievous to the anti-slavery cause to throw open our markets at that juncture to slave-grown sugar. The government, therefore, could offer no change this year, and the reductions proposed by opposition members were rejected by large majorities. In the session of 1843, the same process was gone through; the ministers proposed no change, and gave the same reasons; and they were met by the same arguments and some fruitless amendments from the opposition.

There was not time, towards the close of the busy and profitable session, for a full discussion of the Poor-law Bill

—so deeply as the question of pauper relief was affected by the urgent distress of the times. Many members had much to say against the existing law, and new arrangements to propose; and it was absolutely necessary to do something, for the commission had been renewed, by a vote in the preceding session, for one year; and there must be a provision made against the expiration of the term. With some trouble and difficulty, the home secretary obtained a renewal of the term of the commission for five years, and a settling of some indispensable practical points. A strong effort was made by Mr. Escott to procure permission for magistrates to administer out-door relief at their discretion; but under no pressure of haste, or alarm at the prevailing distress, could the House be so mad as to vote away the essential principle of the great poor-law reform, though there seemed, at one moment, some fear that it might. Mr. Escott's motion in favour of out-door relief at the discretion of the magistrates, was rejected by a majority of 90 to 55; and the commission was renewed for five years, under a promise from Sir James Graham that he would introduce a new bill early in the next session, in which some needful reforms should be proposed.

This year, 1842, settled the law of literary property, as it at present stands, and as it will stand for a long time to come. Before the days of Queen Anne, it was concluded, as a matter of course, that any book or other literary production, was the property of its author; and the old registers of the Stationers' Company show that some thousands of books, even as early as the times of Elizabeth, passed from owner to owner, by descent or sale, like any other property. Acts of parliament, and Star-chamber decrees, also afford evidence that political and legal authorities considered literary works to be the exclusive property of their authors. At no time does any one appear to have doubted the author's exclusive right over his production while it remained in manuscript. The doubt, when it arose, related to his ownership when, by act of publication, he had made his ideas general property. The doubt seems to exhibit a mere confusion between the ideas and the vehicle in which they are communicated—between plagiarism and piracy. The people of the United States

appear to be still unable to make the distinction. Because they can derive and reproduce ideas from an English book, they cannot see why they should not lay hands on the work itself, reprint it, pocket the proceeds of the sale without consideration of the author, and as long as our own laws allowed the practice, send their cheap copies to Europe, and sell them under the author's own eye. Yet more: they cannot see why they should not take a work by an English author whose name will secure a sale, cut out some portions of the book, alter the title, make it such as the author would not acknowledge, put his name to it, profit by that name, and send him no share of the proceeds. They cannot see why they should not put the author's name to a work which he has chosen to publish anonymously. Barbarous and base as this ignorance and cupidity appear—unable as such agents show themselves to be to conceive of a book as a work of art which must no more be tampered with than a statue or a picture—it but little exceeds our own barbarism on this subject a century and a half ago, or even that which might be found among the unreflecting and unintellectual up to the period of the passage of the Copyright Act of 1842.

If books were, before the eighteenth century, considered as of course the property of their authors, the supposition is now held to have been put an end to by the passage of a law which secured to authors and their heirs the property in their works for a term of years—which was in fact taking the property from them after the expiration of that term of years. The act was passed in 1710; and the term fixed was twenty-one years from the day of publication for works already in print, and fourteen years for all works to be henceforward published; the latter term being once renewable, if the author should be still living at the end of the first fourteen years. More than half a century afterwards, however, Lord Mansfield and other authorities settled, as they thought, that the perpetual right of the author over his work was not put an end to by the statute of 1710; but again, five years afterwards, Lord Mansfield and those who agreed with him—the judges being in fact equally divided—were overruled; and it was decided, from 1774 onwards, that perpetual copyright was put an end to

by the intervention of statutes. In 1814, the term was extended in favour of authors, it being now fixed at twenty-eight years for the author and his assigns, and furthermore for the term of the author's life, if he should survive the twenty-eight years' term.

The mischiefs of these restrictions were found to be such as had not been dreamed of by law-makers who believed they were granting a boon to authors; and by this time, some of these evils were becoming evident to the most careless and uninterested. The family of Sir Walter Scott, stripped by his great losses, might be supposed to have an honourable provision in his splendid array of works, which the world was still buying, as eagerly as ever; but the term of copyright of *Waverley* was about to expire; and there was no one who could not see the injustice of transferring to the public a property so evidently sacred to heirs. Again, the poet Wordsworth was now an aged man. His was a reputation which it had taken half a century to bring out clear from the prejudices and false tastes of society in his early day. If he were to die now, his family would be deprived of all benefit from the sale of his works. Again, Southey came forward to declare that he had been prevented by the existing copyright law from undertaking works of weight, research, and permanent value, from inability to undertake labours whose fruits would be taken from him and his heirs just when the world was beginning to find the value of his books, and to buy them. It was clear that the operation of the law was to discourage the preparation of solid works, requiring research and the expenses which belong to it, and yielding pecuniary recompense only slowly and tardily; while it encouraged a flashy light literature, such as might command an immediate, though temporary sale. Probably the attention of the careless was fixed on this question of literary property by the petitions sent up to parliament by various authors about this time; and by none more than by the petition of Thomas Carlyle, which bears date in the spring of 1839. his petition is a remarkable document, which may well nd its place here, from its including considerations of reater depth, and more importance to social philosophy

and morals, than some matters to which a greater space has necessarily been given.

'To the Honourable the Commons of England, in Parliament assembled, the petition of THOMAS CARLYLE, a writer of books,

'Humbly showeth,

'That your petitioner has written certain books, being incited thereto by various innocent or laudable considerations, chiefly by the thought that said books might in the end be found to be worth something. That your petitioner had not the happiness to receive from Mr. Thomas Tegg, or any publisher, repbulisher, printer, bookseller, book-buyer, or other the like man or body of men, any encouragement or countenance in writing of said books, or to discern any chance of receiving such; but wrote them by effort of his own, and the favour of Heaven. That all useful labour is worthy of recompense; that all honest labour is worthy of the chance of recompense; that the giving and assuring to each man what recompense his labour has actually merited, may be said to be the business of all legislation, polity, government, and social arrangement whatever among men —a business indispensable to attempt, impossible to accomplish accurately, difficult to accomplish without inaccuracies, that become enormous, unsupportable, and the parent of social confusions which never altogether end. That your petitioner does not undertake to say what recompense in money this labour of his may deserve; whether it deserve any recompense in money, or whether money in any quantity could hire him to do the like. That this his labour has found hitherto, in money, or money's worth, small recompense or none; that he is by no means sure of its ever finding recompense; but thinks that, if so, it will be at a distant time, when he, the labourer, will probably no longer be in need of money, and those dear to him will still be in need of it. That the law does at least protect all persons in selling the production of their labour at what they can get for it, in all market-places to all lengths of time. Much more than this the law does to many, but so much it does to all, and less than this to none. That your petitioner cannot discover himself to have done unlawfully

in this his said labour of writing books, or to have become criminal, or have forfeited the law's protection thereby. Contrariwise, your petitioner believes firmly that he is innocent in said labour; that if he be found in the long-run to have written a genuine enduring book, his merit therein, and desert towards England and English and other men, will be considerable, and not easily estimable in money; that, on the other hand, if his book prove false and ephemeral, he and it will be abolished and forgotten, and no harm done. That, in this manner, your petitioner plays no unfair game against the world; his stake being life itself, so to speak—for the penalty is death by starvation—and the world's stake nothing till once it see the dice thrown; so that in any case the world cannot lose. That in the happy and long-doubtful event of the game's going in his favour, your petitioner submits that the small winnings thereof do belong to him or his, and that no other mortal has justly either part or lot in them at all, now, henceforth, or for ever. May it therefore please your honourable House to protect him in said happy and long-doubtful event; and, by passing your Copyright Bill, forbid all Thomas Teggs, and other extraneous persons, entirely unconcerned in this adventure of his, to steal from him his small winnings, for a space of sixty years at the shortest. After sixty years, unless your honourable House provide otherwise, they may begin to steal.

'And your petitioner will ever pray.

'Thomas Carlyle.'

The sixty years here mentioned were the term proposed by the mover for a new Copyright Act—Mr. Serjeant Talfourd—in three successive sessions. In 1841, his bill was thrown out, mainly through the influence of a speech of Mr. Macaulay's, which afforded an humbling proof of the carelessness of the House, on subjects which had not been long rendered familiar by discussion. As for the riddle how an able literary man could utter such a speech, and venture to offer it to the House, the answer given at the time was that there must be reasons behind—some cause which could not be alleged—for such a man exposing himself in a speech unsound in its whole argument,

and for the House acting upon it. The reason most commonly supposed was that the bill before the House was badly drawn, and could not have been worked; if so, it might have been better to have pointed this out. But it does not matter much what the real reason was; for Mr. Macaulay himself wrought on the other side in the next session, when Serjeant Talfourd was no longer in the House. Lord Mahon brought forward the subject, proposing an extension of twenty-five years in the term of literary proprietorship. Mr. Macaulay proposed a term of forty-two years, on which the House decided. Moreover, the House accepted another amendment brought forward by Lord Mahon and opposed by Mr. Macaulay, which gave to the heirs a further term of seven years from the death of the author. Under the somewhat sudden zeal for the rights of authors, therefore, shown by parliament in 1842, the law awarded to authors the sole property of their works for life, and to their heirs for seven years more. If those seven years should expire before the end of forty-two years from the time of publication, then the right was to run through the forty-two years. This was something gained in the direction of justice; and few now doubt that it will be found possible so to make arrangements for the preparation of cyclopædias and other compilations as in time to allow to authors and their heirs their literary property in perpetuity, as every argument for such a product being property at all is adverse to its ceasing to be so at any particular date. If the institution of property is to stand, it is hardly possible that this kind—of so special and high an order—should remain precarious and transitory, in comparison with all else.

As the elections of 1841 had been a last struggle for and against the maintenance of the Whig government, it was natural that bribery—always too common at a general election—should abound; and it was believed that on this occasion the profligacy had exceeded all ordinary limits. Several cases had been brought before election committees in the Commons for investigation; and the termination of some of these inquiries was so strange as to attract suspicion, and cause uneasiness, both in and out of the House. The return of the members for Reading was objected to,

on the ground of bribery; evidence was produced before the committee, which went to substantiate the charges; and in the midst of the business, the committee was suddenly informed that the petition was withdrawn. There was nothing to be done but for the committee to declare the sitting members duly elected; but every one suspected that this was not the end of the matter. Presently it was announced that one of the members for Reading was about to accept the Chiltern Hundreds. A similar proceeding followed in a second case, and a third, and a fourth; and, where the seat was not immediately vacated, or declared to be held only till next month, it was rumoured and believed that the resignation would take place at the end of the session. This was a degree of corruption not to be endured; and on the 5th of May, Mr. Roebuck gave notice that, on the next evening, he should put a question to the member for Reading, and other members whom he named.

On the 6th, a singular scene took place in the House—a scene very instructive to those who witnessed it, and to those who afterwards read of it. Mr. Roebuck was universally regarded as an upright man and independent member, who had the fullest right that uprightness and independence could give to watch over the purity of the representation, and rebuke every act of corruption. But he was also felt to be fully conscious of his position, and not at all too modest in the exhibition of it. He was considered rather too apt to assume the office of censor on occasions which were hardly worth the unpopularity he attracted to himself by it; and, by long tenure of this office, his speaking had verged more and more towards lecturing—towards admonition—in an assemblage where such a tone is least admissible. After he had announced that he had a question to ask of the member for Reading, and other members, there was much eagerness for the sport. Every one knew that Mr. Roebuck would be in the right, and his victims most miserably embarrassed by the wrong of their position; and the scene was likely to be a curious one, between the haughty purism of the censor on the one hand, and the impotent anger of the compromised members on the other. The scene was a curious one, but not through any frailties of Mr. Roebuck's. According to all

accounts, he was quiet and courteous in manner, said nothing more than the occasion justified, and made only such inquiry as it was incumbent on any member to make who had at heart the honour of parliament and the integrity of the representation.

Mr. Roebuck, addressing himself to Lord Chelsea, one of the members for Reading, said he had heard and believed that the inquiry before the committee had been put an end to by a compromise, in which one, if not both, of the members for Reading was concerned—a bond having been entered into with their knowledge, if not in their names, to the effect that one or both of them should vacate his seat by accepting the Chiltern Hundreds. Such a transaction was a breach of the privileges of the House; and he was therefore entitled to ask, which he did with the most perfect respect for Lord Chelsea, whether he was cognizant of any such arrangement. The same question was afterwards put, with the same deliberation and courtesy, to the members for Nottingham, Lewes, Penryn, and Harwich. Most of the members appealed to made the weakest possible reply. They assumed an air of indignation, and refused to answer impertinent questions about their private affairs and personal arrangements. As the question was based on the strong ground of the privilege of parliament, this futile reply was equivalent to an admission of inability to make a better; and it was thus received—Mr. Roebuck thanking each gentleman significantly for his answer, and the House listening in mingled anxiety and amusement. One member, Mr. Elphinstone, avowed that an objectionable compromise had been agreed upon; that he was no party to it; and that he was not going to vacate his seat—a welcome piece of frankness and manliness in the midst of the strange scene. Captain Plumridge, who sat for Penryn, was no less intrepid. He said he knew nothing of the compromise till it was made; and he disapproved of the arrangement when he was told of it, and did so still. But he afterwards drew upon himself a rebuke from Mr. Roebuck by declaring, in terms which made the lax assemblage laugh uproariously, that he retired because he had 'made a bad bargain.' In the midst of the questioning scene, the chancellor of the exchequer

endeavoured to break in, and call the attention of the House to a discussion on the income-tax; but the inclination of the House was to see this business to an end; and it did so. After all the impugned members had answered, or declined to answer, the discussion was adjourned to the next Monday. It then appeared how awakening was the impression made on the House, and how useless were all attempts to stifle Mr. Roebuck's inquiry. A committee of investigation was appointed; and it was clear that, though the work of that committee might be impeded, and the express aims of its author thwarted by technical devices, the honour of the House was really appealed to, and some check was put upon corruption. One striking incident was the refusal of the appointment of steward of the Chiltern Hundreds by the chancellor of the exchequer. There was, once upon a time, such an office in reality—the business of the steward being to watch over the safety of that district of Buckinghamshire called the Chiltern Hundreds, when its woods were infested with banditti, who were a perpetual trouble to the rural inhabitants. The office had long been merely nominal; but it served, under the description of 'a place of honour and profit under the crown,' as a means of vacating a seat in parliament, which cannot be resigned under any other plea than having accepted such an office. The office is resigned as soon as the parliamentary seat is vacated, that it may be ready for the next applicant. On the present occasion, the application of one of the members for Reading was met by the following reply from the chancellor of the exchequer: 'Under ordinary circumstances, I should not feel justified in availing myself of the discretion vested in me, in order to refuse or delay the appointment for which you have applied, when sought for with a view to the resignation of a seat in parliament. But after the disclosures which have taken place with respect to certain boroughs, of which Reading is one, and after the admission of the facts by the parties interested, I consider that by lending my assistance to the fulfilment of any engagement which may have been entered into as arising out of any such compromise, I should, in some sort, make myself a party to transactions which I do not approve, and of which the House of Com-

mons has implied its condemnation. I feel, moreover, that by a refusal on my part of the means by which alone such engagements can be fulfilled, I afford the most effectual discouragement to the entering into similar compromises in future, and thus promote, so far as is in my power, the intentions of the House of Commons.'

Mr. Roebuck moved for and obtained a committee of investigation into the cases before the House. He moved for and obtained a bill of indemnity to witnesses; and the inquiry was conducted with closed doors. The committee reported, towards the end of July; and it was this report which decided Mr. Goulburn to refuse the Chiltern Hundreds to Lord Chelsea. On the refusal being canvassed in the House, the premier avowed that Mr. Goulburn had acted with the concurrence of the whole cabinet. Mr. Roebuck's resolutions, founded on the report of the committee, against issuing writs for the compromised boroughs till parliament had provided some security against election bribery, were negatived; but every one felt that the report, with its disclosures and dispassionate comments, could not be inoperative. Lord John Russell introduced a bill, whose chief objects were to facilitate the disclosure of bribery committed, rather than to visit it with new penalties; and to prevent such compromises as had lately disgraced the House. The bill passed both Houses before the conclusion of the session, and became law on the 10th of August.

There was something really refreshing to the country, in the midst of its distresses, in the character and action of this session of parliament. At the beginning, the opposition was hostile, saucy, active, and united; and it was curious to see how it changed under the eye of a minister who could frame measures first, and then carry them. Some of his measures were as unacceptable to classes and parties as any that had been brought forward for some years; yet their progress, from their first conception to their becoming the law of the land, was never delayed. The nation saw and felt that its business was understood and accomplished, and the House of Commons was no longer like a sleeper under nightmare. The long session was a busy one. The queen wore a cheerful air when she

thanked her parliament for their effectual labours. The opposition was no longer such as could impede the operations of the next session. The condition of the country was fearful enough; but something was done for its future improvement, and the way was now shown to be open for further beneficent legislation. The solitary circumstance of congratulation, in regard to the condition of the people, was, that there was once more a good harvest.

CHAPTER VII.

Legislation for the Working-classes—Lord Howick's Distress Motion—Lord Ashley—Mines and Collieries Act—Government Factory Bill—Education Clauses—Education Clauses withdrawn—Vacillation about the New Bill—Decision against the Ten-hour Clause—Debate on Colonisation—Early-closing Movement—Case of Governesses—Improvement of Dwellings.

WHEN parliament reassembled on the 2nd of February, there was no increased hopefulness in any quarter. The distress had deepened; the revenue returns indicated a lessened consumption of articles of popular comfort; and the agricultural interests were almost as depressed and alarmed as the manufacturing and commercial classes. Some said the tariff had done no good—forgetting that, as much of it did not come into use till October, it was too soon yet to form a judgment. Some said the tariff caused the distress; and this was so far true that the ignorant among the agricultural body did fall into a panic about the importation of food, and incur great losses by selling off stock, and spreading their own fears over their own class. Some apprehended another change in the corn-law; and all felt that they were not settling down with any confidence under the new sliding-scale, while the League was so growing in numbers and dignity as to appear very like a new power in the state. Under these circumstances, the character of the session of 1843 could be easily anticipated. It was chiefly occupied with the condition of the industrial classes.

And here must arise the old difficulty—the difficulty which is yet unsolved, and which must remain unsolved while our representative system continues imperfect—the difficulty of determining the true province of legislation in regard to the interests of the industrial classes. This was in fact, though not in words, the one great controversy of the session of 1843, as it may yet be of future sessions. There were not many men in the House, though there were too many men in the country, who were heard to say that it is the business of the government to find employment and food for the people; but there were men of opposite extremes in politics, who contended that it was the duty of government to regulate the interests of the poor, and determine the circumstances of their lives by law. Some high Conservatives contended for this on the ground of the supposed parental character of government, which should watch over the members of the state as the Church watches over the members of its own communion. As the High-Churchmen claimed dominion, under a metaphor, for Mother Church, while the Church was in fact impersonal, consisting of an aggregate of believers, so our high-statesmen claimed dominion, under a metaphor, for the state as a parent, while the state is, in fact, impersonal, consisting of an aggregate of persons, agreeing, or destined by circumstances, to live under a particular form of government, laws, and customs. With these high Conservatives were joined those members of the Commons who verged most towards democracy—who claimed a special protection for the poor from government, because the poor were unrepresented in the legislature. A future peer, and the Chartist chairman who had conducted torch-light meetings on a Lancashire moor, were seen advocating together a legal regulation of the poor man's labour; while men of intermediate parties advocated the poor man's cause in a directly opposite manner; by contending that his labour is his only property; and that to interfere with it—to restrict its sale by law—is to infringe fatally on the poor man's rights. The truth was—and it is the truth still—there is much to be said on both sides; for the relation between the state and the working-classes in our country is not settled in theory, any more than in practice.

It is not only true that the working-classes are unrepresented in the legislature; but the circulation of labour and the supply of food—now at last free—were so restricted by law as to depress the poor below the level of comfort, and the means of education. The Church failed in her duty of educating the people; and the state placed them at disadvantage by restrictive laws. In consequence, a population has grown up, special in its ignorance, its sufferings, and its needs, which must be specially dealt with, if at all. It is impossible to admit that, under a representative system, it is the proper business of the government to regulate the private interests of any class whatever. It is impossible, under the far higher constitution of humanity, to refuse attention to the case of the depressed, ignorant, and suffering of our people. The only course seems to be to admit that, as we have not been true to our representative system—being at this day far from having carried it out—we cannot be harshly true to its theory. Having permitted a special misery and need to grow up, we must meet it with a special solace and aid. As to how the solace and aid are to be given—this is the point of difficulty. In the absence of all theory which can command agreement, men must bring themselves into agreement as well as they can under the one guiding principle that nothing must be done to impair any one's rights as a citizen under a representative system. Every man who is now practically excluded from the benefits of the representative system is to be regarded as destined to inclusion under them; and nothing that is done for his mind or his fortunes by the grace of the state is to lower him from his position of theoretical citizenship under a constitution which presumes every man's condition and interests to be in his own hands. Whatever names and aspects the debates and legislation of 1843 might assume, they were almost all, in fact, a study of the serious problem of the relation of the state to the poor.

Lord Howick began, on the 13th of February, with a motion for the appointment of a committee of the whole House to consider the distress of the country. He believed, with Dr. Arnold, that the mass of men rarely feel political uneasiness and discontent except under

pressure of personal want. He believed that this pressure had now become so terrible and so extensive as to peril our institutions; and he called upon the House to consider and decide whether it was not time for government to interfere. The mode of interference which he desired was the repeal of all restrictions on importation; and especially on that of corn—it being understood, however, that the mover desired the imposition of the 8*s.* fixed duty. The real interest of the motion and the debate lay in the certainty that it must elicit from the ministers some declaration of their intentions about the corn-laws; and in the course of it, Sir R. Peel declared that no proposition about the corn-laws would be brought forward this session. But Mr. Gladstone saved the agricultural interest from any false reliance on the stability of the corn-law, by admitting that the whole question of restriction lay in the extent to which the country was able to bear the application of the principles of free-trade. The opposition members now began, with good reason, to treat the corn-law as a 'temporary' expedient, and everything the minister said about it as a 'temporary' answer. This was felt by all the anti-corn-law members to be true; and they, by saying so, not only prepared the way for the total repeal of the corn-law, but prepared the agricultural party to expect it. Lord Howick's motion could not succeed, because it was yet too soon to learn the effects of the great measures of the preceding year. No one could say yet what the income-tax would yield, nor how the timber-trade and other great departments of commerce might be stimulated by the relaxation of duties which had taken place only since October. The majority against the appointment of the committee was 115 in a House of 497.

The next approach to the great problem was made by Lord Ashley, who moved, on the 28th of February, an address to the sovereign, praying that she would immediately and seriously consider what could be done for the religious and moral education of the working-classes. In addition to the difficulties always attending the education question—difficulties which have been exhibited at a prior period of our history—there was now one in connection

with the peculiar reputation of the mover, both in and out of the House. It had by this time become a sort of custom in parliament to praise Lord Ashley's philanthropy, and declare expressly a belief that it was unquestionably sincere—a practice which gave an impression of its being questioned by somebody. The cause of this was, not that Lord Ashley was not a humane man—not that he spared time and effort to aid the suffering—but that the direction of his philanthropy was strange and questionable. His residence was in an agricultural county where the labourers were reduced to the lowest condition then known to Englishmen. It was so on his father's estates—on the estates to which, in the course of nature, he was to succeed; yet he did not take under his protection his nearest neighbours, with whose needs he was, or ought to be, best acquainted; but constituted himself the champion of the Lancashire operatives, whose families had been earning £3 per week, while the peasant families, his neighbours, were earning from 8*s.* to 10*s.* per week, living on food too mean and scanty to support strength, and sleeping under rotten thatch which let in the rain. Lord Ashley was agitating for the personal safety and for the education of the class which was actually the most enlightened, and the best able to take care of itself, of any working-class in England; while the agricultural labourers of his own county were in a state of desperate ignorance and reckless despair, which demanded all his efforts to redress. Knowing nothing of 'the manufacturing system,' as it was called, he had to depend for information on persons from Lancashire and other mill-districts; and it was notorious that his informants were not always respectable, and that he was largely duped; while he need but have gone into the hovels of his father's peasantry to have seen misery, and mental and moral destitution, which could not be matched in the worst retreats of the manufacturing population. Proofs came to light, from time to time, of the bad character and unjustifiable procedure of Lord Ashley's correspondents and visitors from Lancashire; and it was these things that cast a doubt—not on the sincerity of his benevolence, but on his right to assume the position of patron of the operatives in

parliament. Amidst all the protestations and complaints which were lavished there, there was a general persuasion of something unsound; that Lord Ashley mistook the character of the manufacturing class; that he confounded two orders of social evils—town evils and factory evils; and that he had much underrated the intelligence and the resources of the factory population. This partly accounts for the uncertain action of the House generally on Lord Ashley's enterprises; while, it need not be said, he was disliked and slightly regarded by the manufacturing interest in the House, as a man who meddled with what he did not understand, and who strove to set aside the great natural laws of society, for the sake of favouring a class who were, above all others of their rank, able to take care of themselves. One anecdote will suffice to indicate the state of feeling which must have existed between Lord Ashley and the economist section of the House. While the final struggle about the corn-law was going forward, a letter was picked up at Lord Ashley's club, which was evidently dropped from his pocket—it being open and addressed to him. The waiter who picked it up enclosed it in an envelope, and sent it to the office of the Anti-Corn-Law League, where it was opened and read as a matter of business, without any suspicion of what it was about. The letter was from a Lancashire correspondent of Lord Ashley's, who wrote that there was no hope of carrying Lord Ashley's measure of that session but by blackening the character of four mill-firms, whose names were given. These mill-owners happened to be of the very first order—men who had provided schools for the children of their operatives; who had built model-houses for their people, opened lecture and reading rooms, and baths, and places of recreation; who had spontaneously spent many thousands of pounds in the largest liberality towards their industrial neighbours, and were ordinarily on terms of strong good-will with them. This letter was discussed by the council of the League; and the question was debated whether Mr. Hume, or Mr. Villiers, should not be requested to produce *this* letter in the House as a specimen of the quality of Lord Ashley's informants from the factory districts. On the whole, it

was thought better simply to return the letter to its owner, because, though the League council had come into possession of the document quite innocently, the trick of the club-house waiter might be charged upon them; and the effect of the letter might be destroyed by any disgrace attaching to the act of its production. How Lord Ashley regarded the letter, there was no evidence to show. The proof amounted merely to his being in correspondence with a disreputable informant. But the story discloses the state of feeling existing between him and the economist section of the House, who certainly felt themselves justified in calling upon him to do one of two things—to apply himself to the redress of the ignorance and woes of the agricultural population, whose abodes lay round about his own, and whose case he could investigate for himself; or to turn over his championship of the factory classes to some member of the House who had that knowledge of the manufacturing districts in which he was deficient.

In 1842, Lord Ashley had brought forward a bill on behalf of a set of people who really appeared to have been neglected by all mankind, and whose case, when exposed by Lord Ashley, startled parliament and the country. People who move about above-ground, in the face of day, may exhibit their own case, and hope to have it considered by those who look on; but it now appeared that there was a class moving about underground, in the mines and coal-pits of England and Scotland, whose condition of suffering and brutalisation exceeded all that had ever been known, or could be believed. A commission of inquiry, obtained by Lord Ashley, laid open a scene which shocked the whole country. Women were employed as beasts of burden; children were stunted and diseased, beaten, overworked, oppressed in every way; both women and children made to crawl on all-fours in the passages of the pits, dragging carts by a chain passing from the waist between the legs; and all lived in an atmosphere of filth and profligacy which could hardly leave a thought or feeling untainted by vice. This was seen at once to be a special, as well as an extreme case; and a bill for the relief of the women and children of the colliery population was passed with a rapidity which somewhat injured its quality. It was

known that a strong opposition would be raised if the thing were not done at once. It was certain that a multitude of women and children would be thrown out of employment after the passage of the bill; and not a few persons declared the commissioners' report to be full of exaggeration; and the great permanent objection remained, of the disastrous consequences of interfering with the labour-market. The great majority of the nation, however, felt that it was better to have a large burden thrown on the parishes for a time than to let such abuses continue; that, making every allowance for exaggeration, the facts were horrible; and that, the labour-market being already interfered with by Factory Bills, this was not the point to stop at. So the bill passed, with some amendments which Lord Ashley submitted to, rather than wait. By this bill, women were excluded from mining and colliery labour altogether. Boys were not to be employed under the age of ten years; and the term of apprenticeship was limited. The secretary of state was empowered to appoint inspectors of mines and collieries, to see that the provisions of the bill were carried out. The new law took effect after nine months from its date. The operation has, from time to time, been reported as beneficial; and, though it has been found difficult to prevent women from getting down to work in the pits after the habits of a life had made other employment unsuitable or impossible to them, the pressure upon parish or other charity funds turned out to be less than had been anticipated. It was a great thing to have put a stop to the employment of women in toil wholly unsuited to their frame and their natural duties; and to have broken in upon a system of child-slavery which could never have existed so long in our country, if it had not been hidden in the chambers of the earth.

It was between the passage of this act and its coming into operation that Lord Ashley moved to address the queen on the subject of a religious education for the working-classes; and this brought out from Sir James Graham a statement of a government scheme of education, which was to be engrafted upon a Factory Bill of Lord Ashley's order of legislation—a law which should control the des-

tinies of the manufacturing population, without touching the more depressed order of agricultural labourers. It was probably owing in part to this, and to the prevalent belief that the government had been stimulated in its action by a fear of Lord Ashley's activity and pertinacity, insufficiently enlightened by philosophy and experience, that the education clauses of Sir James Graham's Factory Bill failed as they did, and that the Dissenters committed themselves against it in a spirit of enmity which lowered their position more than anything they had done and suffered for a century before.

In order to judge of the government scheme and the opposition to it, it must be remembered with what difficulty any beginning whatever had been made; how jealous was the Church of any admission of Dissenters to the public funds for educational purposes; and how unacceptable to the Dissenters was the idea of compulsory education at all. The difficulty now was that the proposed compulsory education was to be provided for that class—for the children of the manufacturing districts—where the interest of the Dissenters was strongest; while the agricultural classes—the neglected charge of the Church—were left over for a future measure. It ought to be acknowledged on every hand that here was a call for magnanimity all round. It was an occasion for the Church to acknowledge her neglect, and hasten to repair it. It was an occasion for the Dissenters to be modest about their much greater exertions for the education of their own members in the large towns, in consideration of the vast deal which it was not in their power to do. It was an occasion for all parties bravely to face the fearful truth of the amount of popular ignorance, and to decide deliberately whether it was best for all to yield some of their desires about doctrinal religious instruction, or for hundreds of thousands of children to pass off into utter darkness—ignorant not only of all religious doctrine whatever, but of the plainest truths and practices of morals. The Church was more equal to the occasion than the Dissenters. The Church yielded more than she had ever offered before to the consciences of Dissenters; and, when the Dissenters threw out the educational part of the government scheme,

the Church set vigorously to work to raise funds by voluntary subscriptions, for the extension and improvement of the National Church Schools. Whatever may be thought of the quality of the education given in those schools, indisputable proof was afforded in the exertions of the Church during 1843, of the earnestness of the desire of the Church for the education of the people, as she conceived of education. The Dissenters at the same time appear to have erred—naturally, perhaps, but widely and fatally. In their fear of 'compromise'—a fear usually so honourable and so wise—they forgot that this was a case in which loss of time was fatal. They had been right hitherto in rejecting measures of religious liberty which had anything unsound in them—in waiting from year to year for a perfect Marriage Bill, for instance, rather than put up with a partial one; but in the present case, every year of delay removed thousands of children beyond the reach of education, and thus consigned them to risks and injury immeasurably more fatal than any kind or degree of religious error could possibly have been. Some of the Dissenters saw and felt this, and perceived it to be their duty to take the most liberal scheme they could obtain in the first place, try to enlarge it afterwards, and continue to prosecute their voluntary efforts as before, so as to make the government measure a supplement to their own exertions, instead of a substitute for them. This, however, required a magnanimity of which all were not capable; and the large majority of the Dissenters were led away to overrate the extent and quality of the education they could impart; to overlook the large area where they could not work at all; and to disregard or deny the great truth that the voluntary principle is inapplicable to education, because it is precisely those who need education most that are least capable of demanding it, desiring it, and even conceiving of it. The opposition of the Dissenters prevailed. The opportunity was lost of taking the Church in a genial and liberal mood, and of providing for the children of various sects being reared as brethren, while instructed each in the doctrine of his own communion. All that was possible was done for the perpetuating of sectarian rancour, and for hounding on ignorance and bigotry to new assaults

on the innocence and peace of society. By this mistake, it is now pretty well understood that the Dissenters lost more in character and influence than they can regain in a long course of years; and, with all their large promises, sincere but rash, they have done nothing effectual in the way of substitution for the measure they rejected.

The outline of the government measure was this. Factory children had been legislated for before, as we have seen; and, as was anticipated, such legislation had been inoperative. It was now proposed that factory children between the ages of eight and thirteen should not work for more than six hours and a half per day; that they should be obliged to attend schools provided for the purpose; the children of Churchmen, Catholics, and Dissenters, being committed, for certain appointed hours in every week, to the charge of their respective pastors, for religious instruction according to the creed of their parents. The measure was enlarged so as to include all pauper children in the towns, and all other children whose parents would consent to their entering the schools. Thus the larger proportion of children then uneducated was provided for; and a promise was held out of an extension of the system to include the neglected part of the agricultural population, in a short time. As there was nothing here which need interfere with any existing schools, and as the most careful provision was made for the equality within the schools of children of all sects, there would really have been nothing for the Dissenters to protest against if it had not been for the trusteeship provision. There were to be seven trustees to each school under the act; four of whom were to be elective, but the other three must be the clergyman of the district and two churchwardens. This would almost necessarily yield a majority of Church trustees over Dissenters; but as it is difficult to see how any freer arrangement could be offered in a society where an Established Church exists at all, the opposition to it amounted to a declaration that there should be no general scheme of education in coexistence with an establishment; and the prospect of popular education was postponed to the day when the Church should be overthrown as an establishment.

Within the House, all went well. Lord J. Russell, while offering some few objections, gave the scheme his hearty support as a whole; and men of all faiths and parties showed themselves disposed to concede what was necessary to the accomplishment of the object. The queen's reply to the address was cordial. But presently the Dissenters were up and stirring in opposition; and their speeches at public meetings, and the language of some of their petitions, evinced a misconception of the measure which showed that it was doomed. The remainder of the session would not suffice for disabusing those who had been so unaccountably misled about the facts of the measure. An inquirer here and there had the curiosity to ascertain how many, of all the alarmed Dissenters he was acquainted with, had seen the bill, or learned for themselves what its provisions really were; and scarcely an instance was found of any one having obtained his information at first hand. It was a case of panic; and the result was shown in circulars full of misstatements, in public meetings full of violence, and in the presentation of such a mass of petitions against the bill as had never been seen in modern times. On the 1st of May, Sir James Graham brought forward explanations and some important amendments, enlarging the number of trustees, and so altering the wording of the bill as to make clear the entire independence of the children of different sects, in regard to religious instruction and worship. But it was useless to explain and concede. Nearly 200 petitions against the bill were presented by one member in one day; and Lord J. Russell was charged with one from the city of London, signed by 55,000 persons. On the 15th of June, Sir James Graham announced, with deep regret, that the government felt itself compelled to give up the educational clauses of the bill; and on the 19th, he proposed to carry forward the rest of the measure.

At the beginning of the next session, accordingly, Sir James Graham introduced a Factory Bill, divested of the education clauses; and it was the fate of this bill which indicated the uncertain mind and temper of the House in regard to Lord Ashley's philanthropic enterprises. When this bill went into committee, Lord Ashley moved a clause

by which the working-day for women and young persons was reduced from twelve to ten hours. In the course of his speech, he made statements which showed that he did not understand the nature of the labour employed in the cotton manufacture any more than the great natural laws which regulate labour and production. In this speech, he went too far for the government, as well as the economist party, though he was supported by the many who indulge feeling at the expense of reason, and in indolence of thought—by the same sort of men as formerly strove to regulate wages, food, and dress by act of parliament. Sir James Graham opposed him with pain, seeing how the very subsistence of two millions of people was concerned in any legislation which should tamper with the cotton manufacture—that great branch of industry which had been introduced under a system of freedom from parliamentary interference. Sir James Graham not only saw this as an economist, but he felt his responsibility, as secretary for the home department, in regard to any legislative interference which might affect the maintenance of two millions of people. He saw the consequences of abridging 'by one-sixth the whole period allowed for the replacement of capital and the production of profit;' and he would not venture the risk of a corresponding reduction of the wages of the work-people. The men must stop work when the women and boys stopped; and such a legislative interference with the natural course of manufacture was not to be adventured for any reasons which had been alleged. The thing to be done was clear to his mind—to educate the people, so as to enable them to take care of their one great property, their labour; and not to deprive them by law of the disposal of that, their only property. To provide by law leisure and opportunity for children to be educated was one thing; to stop the labour of working-men by restricting the labour of their wives was another; and he must oppose all interference which was, in fact, tyranny under the name of humanity. These were also the views of Sir R. Peel; and the government was considered so far pledged against Lord Ashley's motion as that the majority of nine which he obtained at first was considered a serious defeat.

There was a hope still. When the eighth clause came to be discussed, Lord Ashley would have to move the substitution of ten hours for twelve; and government would proceed that far with the bill, in hope that the House would reconsider this important matter. When the time came, the House voted in a way which showed that it did not understand the business before it. There was a majority of three against the proposal of twelve hours; and then, immediately after, a majority of seven against ten hours. Sir James Graham said that as the House would not consent to the term of either ten or twelve hours, the government must take time to consider what could be done next. The result was that Lord Ashley gave way, permitting government to withdraw the bill, and bring in another, which was the same in all respects, except that it contained no clause specifying the hours of labour. On the third reading of the new bill, Lord Ashley moved that the hours of labour should be restricted to eleven per day for three years from the next October, and to ten from that time forward. The debate reads strangely to any one familiar with the life and lot of the working-classes. A multitude of the operatives who had petitioned for a ten-hour bill had been tempted by the placards which were seen all over Manchester: 'Less work. More wages. Sign for ten hours.' But now, the ten-hour men in the House talked glibly of the way in which the inevitable reduction of wages would be compensated by moral advantages; and of the ease with which parliament could retrace its steps, if the reduction should be found to go too far. The opponents of this rash and meddling legislation declared themselves appalled at the prospect of diminished wages, of which their opponents talked so lightly, and about which they desired to leave the working-class no choice; and it was pointed out that if the step was retraced, it would be on account of the fatality—which would then have become irreparable—of the loss of our foreign trade. Sooner than this could happen, however, as experienced men felt and said, the law would be evaded, and, by some means or other, practically set aside; for no law could work in defiance of the needs of capitalists and labourers; and then we should have perpetrated the unspeakable mischief of break-

ing a solemn promise to the people, and teaching them to despise the law and distrust the law-makers. The debate ended in a majority of 138 against the ten-hour limitation; and the bill was passed by the Commons with only seven dissentient voices. It was not much discussed in the Lords; and it presently became law.

In the next session, 1845, Lord Ashley introduced two bills, which were taken up and carried by the government; one bringing young people employed in print-works under the protection of the factory measure, and the other providing for the better care of lunatics. This last was a good step taken in an unquestionable cause. As for the factory legislation, it is almost as melancholy to witness the efforts made to cure the evils of our over-wrought competitive system as to contemplate the evils themselves. First, we have allowed our operative population to grow up, in less ignorance than some other classes, it is true, but with a wholly insufficient knowledge of their own condition and liabilities. They have overcrowded the labour-market, so as to be compelled to work harder, not than other classes of labourers who earn smaller wages, but than is good for anybody to labour; and then we try to mend the matter by forbidding them to sell more than a given amount of their labour. It is not thus that the excessive competition which is the cause of the mischief can be reduced; and the true friends of the working freeman felt that he lost nothing, while he retained his liberty, by the failure of Lord Ashley's ten-hour measures of 1844.

Lord Ashley wrought in a better direction when he heartily seconded Mr. Charles Buller's motion, in the session of 1843, in favour of extensive and systematic colonisation, as a means of lessening the excessive competition in the labour-market at home, and of opening new fields of subsistence and of commerce, to the mutual advantage of the colonists and of the stayers at home. Though the discussion did not lead to any immediate practical result, it was eminently useful in directing attention to the true principles of relief, and affording large information as to our colonising prospects. We shall hereafter see what was doing in this field.

While parliament was thus almost exclusively occupied

with beneficent legislation, and what was intended as such —thus indicating the peculiar pressure of the time— society out of doors was following in the same track. We see, with great satisfaction, about this time, a rising movement in favour of shortening the hours of trading in shops. Here, where exchange and not production is concerned, there can be no reasonable objection to bringing the exhausting labour of shop attendance within endurable limits. As long as the fair convenience of purchasers is considered, and the shops are kept open for the length of an average working-day, a timely closing of the shops is a benefit to the tradesman and his assistants in every way. The one thing to be done was to induce the tradesmen in the same line to agree to close their shops at the same hour; and this has been found not difficult on the whole. The early-closing movement began to be talked about at this time; and a prospect was opening to the shopman and shopwoman of evening reading, or social converse, or rest, or, if their fatigue permitted it, a breath of fresh air at other times than on Sundays. And we note also the commencement of the movement on behalf of one of the most suffering classes of society—the governesses. The position of this unfortunate class is so anomalous, so unnatural, and, at our own particular period, so depressed, that the efforts of all the benevolent among us could do but little for relief. But, from this time, it was at least certain that the neglect of society was at an end; and this was the clear beginning of the end which must one day arrive. From this time, some few of the suffering multitude of female educators would be sheltered in their latter years, and tended in sickness, and aided to provide resources against a season of age and sickness. We were to have among us asylums for aged governesses, and homes for such as were unemployed; and methods of insurance or deposit for annuities for such as were earning salaries; and, better than all these, an awakening of society to the inquiry why this class is one which suffers so bitterly, and whether it can be justifiable to have among us a class so indispensable, and yet so unhappy. It may be hoped that there were employers of governesses who were now moved to consider whether they could not afford some solace

of sympathy, and respect, and social converse, and improvement, and amusement, to the inmate of their house whose position was one of utter loneliness in the midst of numbers.

We notice at this time also projects for improving the dwellings of the poor. We read of model lodging-houses —of mansions for families where, at a less cost than had been paid for the most wretched roosting-places, poor families might be provided with clean and airy rooms, with a supply of water, light, and warmth. Suggestions were even made of a common kitchen, wash-house and bakehouse, and other devices of domestic Socialism, which made the timid look to see whether the principle of Communism was gaining ground in England, as it was reported to be in France, Germany, and Italy. The greater number felt, however, that it mattered little what name such projects were called by, if they supplied the necessaries and comforts of life, on a principle independent of almsgiving, to those who could enjoy them only by means of the economy of association.

The queen's letter was still looked to as a means of relief for the still starving people in the manufacturing districts. This royal letter was prepared by the advice, and under the eye, of the privy-council. It was addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury; and it directed that the bishops should see that it was read on an appointed Sunday, in all the churches, that the people might be moved to charitable contribution for the relief of the distress; their contributions to be collected from house to house in the course of the week following the publication of the letter. The transaction, which began in May 1842, was spread over some months—Lord Wharncliffe declaring, in the next session, that the sum raised under this letter amounted to about £75,000, which was expended in the most distressed manufacturing counties. It was thought to be a mistake at the time to have recourse to so extreme a method of appeal in a season when all hearts that could be so reached were already opened and softened by the indications of unequalled distress on every hand; and the smallness of the sums raised in response to the royal invitation, in proportion to those provided by private subscription, seems to

show that there was a failure of judgment and taste in the act. But it combines with other incidents of the time to show that the great social tendency of the day was to consider the poor. This consideration occupied almost all the time of parliament, and was most prominent in the thought of the country—eminently combining with and stimulating the action of the most powerful body in the community at that time—the Anti-Corn-Law League.

CHAPTER VIII.

Movements in Ireland—O'Connell's Proceedings—'Monster Meetings'—Arbitration Courts—Anti-rent Movement—Irish Arms Act—Clontarf Meeting—Arrest of Repeal Leaders—The Trials—The Verdict—The Sentence—Appeal to the Lords—Judgment reversed—Demonstrations—O'Connell as a Landlord—His Decline and Death—Industrial Improvements—Charitable Bequests Act—Penal Acts Repeal—Viceroyalty discussed—Endowment of Catholic Clergy—Maynooth Grant—New Colleges—The Devon Commission—Coercion Bill—Bill lost—Threatenings of Famine.

IN January 1841, Mr. O'Connell said, at a meeting of the Repeal Association of Dublin: 'I shall, for my part, vote for the Whigs on all party questions, in order to keep them in; but I tell them honestly and openly, that they have lost altogether the hearts of the Irish people; and nothing but the loud cry for repeal shall henceforth be heard among us. . . . . I did not resume the repeal agitation till I saw how utterly unable the Whigs were to effect anything.' It might be asked why Mr. O'Connell desired to keep in the Whigs if they had lost the hearts of the Irish people, and were utterly powerless. It appears that he really did suppose that a Conservative ministry—such as the Peel administration was by anticipation supposed to be—would treat Ireland as the rank old Orangemen of the north would have her treated; and that the alternative was merely between nothing being done for Ireland, and her being cruelly oppressed. Just before the bed-chamber dispute, when it was known that Sir R. Peel might come

in at any moment if he would, and that it was the 'Irish difficulty' which prevented his doing so, Mr. O'Connell was looking round anxiously for every means of making the Irish question popular in England—even requesting an English author, whom he thought likely to be listened to, to travel in Ireland, under facilities provided by himself, in order to report upon the condition of the country. His apprehension of insufferable coercion from a Conservative government was probably real; and it led him, from this date, into that monstrous agitation for the repeal of the union which was as fatal to himself as to his unhappy country. From this time, he began to reap his retribution for his rash, unprincipled, and most mischievous political conduct. From this time, he drew down upon himself a burden of embarrassment and irksome responsibility, under which, after long perplexity and anguish of mind, he sank spirit-broken and terror-stricken, leaving a name which was soon to be cursed by his countrymen as fervently as it had ever been blessed. Probably, no one now supposes him to have been sincere in any expectation or desire to obtain a repeal of the union; for nothing can be more futile, or more audacious in absurdity, than his replies to Lord Charlemont and others who objected to the efficacy of repeal, and showed that if it was obtained to-morrow, the redemption of Ireland would remain to be achieved, with less chance of unity of councils and dispassionateness of action than under the imperial connection; but he was probably of opinion that the best means of making Ireland attended to and cared for was by making her feared; and that the best way of making her feared was by pushing the repeal agitation.

In this year, we find him waging war against British manufacturers. 'His pantaloons, waistcoat, and coat were Irish. . . . . He considered the pleasure of giving employment to Irish hands part of the value of the price he gave for anything.' He might speak for himself; but he could not expect poorer Irishmen to indulge themselves in this sort of luxury; and the effort to exclude English manufactures failed, though O'Connell passed a law to that effect, and even attempted to enforce it, in opposition to the Dublin magistracy. Mr. O'Connell made journeys, and

attended dinners, for the furtherance of repeal; and in February, we find him declaring that he had been refused post-horses, through Orange intimidation; from which fact he drew the conviction, that if he had travelled on the day first fixed, his carriage would have certainly been destroyed, and himself probably murdered. In March, at a meeting on the Curragh of Kildare, he protested against a published calculation of the length of his agitation, from his age being sixty-five. 'Ten or eleven of his uncles and aunts lived to be above ninety;' and the prospect of his scope of agitation was indefinite, as he 'could make as much of three years as most men could of thirty.' In April, we find him holding forth on the grievous subject of rents, and proposing plans, procured from a committee of his own, for securing a tenancy of not less than twenty years for every man on the land, with power to all to purchase small farms, paying for them by instalments, with the rent. At the same date, he admitted the difficulty of enforcing his order to exclude British manufactures, and accounted for it by audaciously declaring that it was owing to an influx of English workmen, 'who had come over to keep down the wages of the Irish operative.' In the same month, certain American sympathisers sent over some hundreds of pounds for the furtherance of the repeal cause; and O'Connell declared that the Irish parliament was not dead—only slept—and would be awakened now by the crowing of the American cocks across the Atlantic. He took occasion to stimulate the repeal wardens to augment their funds, saying that two millions of repealers—and he could not do with less than two millions of repealers—would yield, at 1*s.* per man, £100,000. By this time, O'Connell's 'Board of Trade' had discovered that it would be necessary to supersede the Dublin shopkeepers by 'marts for the exclusive sale of Irish commodities,' as the shopkeepers would not join in the movement to exclude British manufactures. By the middle of May it had become clear that Sir R. Peel was coming into power; and O'Connell proposed a simultaneous meeting, on a Sunday, of all the parishes of Ireland, in order to implore the queen 'not to receive into her confidence the bitter and malignant ancient enemies of her faithful Irish people.'

Before this month was over, the repeal meetings in the provinces were becoming grand shows—one on the hill of Kilnoe, in Clare, consisting of 100,000 men; and another at Ardsullas, leading the way in that organisation which afterwards gave their formidable character to such meetings. The people came in companies, led by their priests, from distances of ten or fifteen miles, with temperance bands playing before them. A bedridden old woman was carried ten miles to see the preparations made 'for the salvation of her country.' During the absorption of the passions of the people in the growing agitation, the diminution of crime appears remarkable. While there was 'but one voice upon the breeze of heaven—Hurrah for repeal!' —and the shout arose 'from the Giants' Causeway to Cape Clear, from Connemara to the Hill of Howth'—the judges were congratulating the juries on there being few prisoners for trial, or 'the dock was empty.' In August, the liberator's speeches contain a curious medley; announcing his intended measure for securing to every man a long or perpetual holding of the land he lives on; desiring the people not to rebel as long as they could help it; intimating that steam-boats could bring aid from America in ten days; and longing for the hour which he declared might soon arrive, when the queen, flying from the Tory enemies of her throne, should take refuge in the arms of her faithful Irish. To these he added two curious declarations—that he had always been opposed to the introduction of a poor-law into Ireland; and that he had arranged to introduce hand-loom weaving into Ireland, trusting to achieve an exclusion of the productions of British power-looms. By this time, the repeal meetings were 'immense;' and the priests of one diocese which contained 105 had all joined but one. A member was now added to the association, whose accession was uproariously hailed—Mr. O'Connell's latest grandchild, aged four days. Nothing was omitted which could amuse or gratify the people. In October, the government papers in London intimated plainly that the cabinet intended to take no notice of any nonsense in Ireland, but that any acts obviously dangerous to the general peace would be put down with the strong hand; and an appeal was made to the newspaper press on

the Conservative side not to record the boasts and menaces of the repealers, as nothing but neglect seemed to be necessary to empty the benches at repeal meetings. This declaration of the *Standard*, in October 1841, was regarded as an indication of the policy of the new administration in regard to the repeal movement. Mr. O'Connell had before declined the office of lord-mayor of Dublin. He now changed his mind, and accepted the dignity, for the facilities it would afford for extending the repeal cause. In November, the movement had become important enough to be visited with opposition and defection. A prominent member withdrew, convinced by the arguments of opponents that Ireland wanted peace and quiet more than political changes; and an intrepid parish priest refused to collect repeal rent from his flock, because they were already under the pressure of poverty. By this time, the new census was out; and Mr. O'Connell made use of it to charge upon the British government a 'wholesale extermination of the Irish people'—'a frightful slaughter of human beings'—because the population had increased at a considerably slower rate during the last than the preceding ten years. At every meeting in Dublin now, contributions from the United States were handed in, amounting by this time to many hundreds of pounds. The O'Connell rent was also swelling—the sum collected in the Dublin district alone this year exceeding £2000. In a month, it became clear how the new lord-mayor meant to use his office for the benefit of the repeal cause. In one hour and a half he admitted seventy-three new freemen—all of them having avouched themselves Catholics, and 'of the right sort.' The dignitary declared the business to be 'going on swimmingly;' and that there would be no need for him to be made permanent lord-mayor by perpetual re-election, because he could put things in train during this year, and get a sound coadjutor appointed to succeed him, who would do the same in his turn. Such avowals appear to have created no disgust among his followers, amidst their loud talk of political right and justice. All means to their end seem to have been, not only fair, but laudable in their eyes. These preparations indicate what might be expected from a subsequent time.

In 1842, however, there was something like a suspension of the repeal agitation. The harvest having been bad, the people suffered cruelly, in many of the rural districts. Food riots and agrarian disturbances fill the foreground of the picture during that year—attacks upon flour-mills; people roaming the streets in the towns of Galway, and collecting before every potato storehouse; lives lost at Ennis; and a special commission sent down to scenes of disturbance. The next year was that in which the repeal agitation reached its height.

It is at this time that we begin to see mention of 'monster meetings.' Early in January, Mr. O'Connell announced the repeal of the union to be 'all but immediate,' if the clergy and laity would unite in their overwhelming majority; and he added: '1843 is and shall be the repeal year.' A remarkable step, and one which created great excitement in Dublin, was that Mr. O'Connell carried a repeal petition to parliament by an overwhelming majority in the corporation of Dublin. This was in March; and presently occurred the monster meeting at Trim, where 30,000 people were present. At the dinner which succeeded the meeting, the agitator ventured upon his boldest language; talked of the scaffold, victory or the grave, and dared the young men to say whether they would be slaves, or shed their blood in the field. At the Mullingar meeting, on the 14th of May, it appeared that every Catholic bishop in Ireland was a repealer. To this meeting the peasantry thronged, even from a distance of forty miles; and the numbers were somewhere between 100,000 and 130,000. By this time, all pretence of assembling to petition parliament was laid aside; and parliament was spoken of with mere contempt. As the government did not interfere, the agitator grew bolder and more threatening in his language, and more plainly invited his followers to wrest repeal from the hand of imperial tyranny. The government still professed its intention of relying on the ordinary powers of the law, except with regard to the holding of arms, about which a keenly contested bill passed through parliament during the summer. The chancellor of Ireland, Sir Edward Sugden, removed from the commission of the peace Lord

Ffrench and several other magistrates who had taken part in repeal demonstrations; but this act, however much questioned in the House of Commons, was one which lay within the ordinary powers of the law.

It appears as if the first serious fears of the government were excited by the monster meeting at Tara, on the 15th of August, where O'Connell, who provoked the old association of ideas about the bully and the coward, bragged more grandly than ever, because it seemed that the government would give him nothing to fear. He declared that he had been laughed at for saying in January that this was the repeal year; but it was his turn to laugh now; for it was certain that before twelve months more, the parliament would be in College Green, Dublin. He believed he was 'able to announce' to his hearers that not twelve months could possibly elapse, without hurrahs for the Irish parliament in College Green being heard over the land. He opened glimpses of his plan for extorting permission from the queen for Ireland to govern herself; and these words were addressed to an assemblage estimated by various reporters at from 500,000 to 2,000,000 of persons. The hill of Tara was like a huge encampment. Some persons arrived overnight; others flocked in from the break of day; and after ten o'clock, imposing processions, with music and banners, converged from various points. The spot was chosen for its revolutionary associations—the old kings of Ireland having been elected on the hill; and the rebels of 1798 having there sustained a defeat. A head-ornament, half cap, half crown, was prepared, wherewith to crown the liberator; and there can be no doubt that the peasant-multitude believed the day to be come when they were to be freed from a foreign domination, and restored to national grandeur, and universal comfort and wellbeing. This appears to have been the occasion—at the dinner after the meeting—when the scheme of establishing arbitration courts was first recommended. The people were advised to desert and ignore the courts of law; and the magistrates who were dismissed from the commission of the peace on account of their repeal opinions, were to serve as O'Connell's justices, and decide on all disputes brought before them. These

arbitration courts did actually, for a considerable time, almost supersede the regular tribunals. Of course, the plan could not work long; and there was, perhaps, no part of the repeal agitation, except the temperance, that the friends of the Irish liked so well. It encouraged peace and courtesy—checked the litigious—and would probably act in the very beneficial direction of giving the people some better notion than they had before of the use and value of law. As the decisions of O'Connell's justices were not legal, their courts could not long exist; and the practice of arbitration died out, like all the liberator's arrangements.

On Sunday, the 20th of August, another monster meeting was held at Roscommon—less numerous than it would have been if the tenantry of some landlords had not complained to their landlords that their attendance would be compulsory if they had not protection in staying away. Troops and police were stationed within call, but out of sight. The agitator's tone was very warlike. After calling 'teetotalism the finest effluence of human virtue,' he said that, 'if he had to go to battle,' he should have the teetotalers with him; and there was not an army in the world that he would not fight with them. Two days afterwards, a scheme was produced, which amused and occupied the repealers, and made them think that something was doing—a plan of O'Connell's proposed Irish parliament. In this there was an elaborate-looking detail of the populations of Irish towns and counties, with an apportionment of representatives; and there was something for the people to do in studying this; but there was no hint given as to how this parliament was to be procured. When pressed on that point, the agitator declared that the queen would grant this parliament by proclamation; and then the parliament would 'legalise everything.' This is all. The most careful search into the records of the time yields nothing more; not a trace of a practical plan, political or military; not a particle of evidence that O'Connell was really seeking a repeal of the union. Unwilling as every one must be to suppose that a man so able and powerful was in fact hoaxing an anxious and suffering people for a course of years—diverting them

from the benefits of the imperial connection to follow false lights—seducing them from peaceful industry, to rove the country in a bitter holiday fashion—it is impossible for the careful inquirer to avoid the conviction that O'Connell knew that there would be no repeal of the union. We find marchings hither and thither, temperance bands, Tara crowns, 'purple robes with fur'—all regal—oaths and pledges, flattery of the worst parts of the Irish character, pernicious excitement of hatreds of race, paper schemes and impromptu laws, and an ardent and unremitting pushing of the demand for money; but, with all this, no word spoken or written, no act done, no purpose peeping out, which shows any practical intent of procuring repeal.

At this harvest-time, a new method of aiding the cause began to be practised. On O'Connell promising fixity of tenure—virtual possession—to every holder of land, in case of an Irish parliament once assembling in Dublin, the Catholic Bishop of Armagh and other priests began to give 'warning' that the people would sooner or later refuse to pay their rents. The warning was precisely one which was likely to work its own fulfilment; and we find the priests here and there preaching to their flocks that they should gather in their harvest, lay by what they wanted for themselves, and then, if any was left, they might pay it over for rent. As an improvement upon this, bands of strangers now appeared from a distance—200 of one party on a Sunday morning—and cut and carried the produce of small farms, bringing cars with them for the purpose, and leaving the tenant to show his landlord his bare fields as excuse for non-payment of his rent. These collusive thefts, perpetrated in open day, and amidst the sympathy of the neighbourhood, are among the worst features of the time. Another was the coercion used to raise money for the cause—the reapers at this harvest being required to produce their repeal-tickets—receipts for a shilling—before they could obtain work. 'If O'Connell knew,' said one of these reapers, who was walking back from Meath to Drogheda, with blistered feet, to fetch his repeal-ticket—'if O'Connell knew what a comfort a shilling is to our families, he would let us alone.' This was said just at the time when the queen, in

the House of Lords, was expressing her sorrow for the injury caused to the Irish people by the seditious efforts of the agitators of the day. She was resolved to sustain the union, and was endeavouring to preserve the tranquillity of Ireland by the use of the ordinary powers of the law, being unwilling to resort to measures of coercion, and feeling assured that she might rely on the co-operation of a multitude of faithful subjects in Ireland. Mr. O'Connell pronounced this speech to be 'an excess of impudence and stupidity combined;' but, perhaps aware that it might appear ludicrous for an O'Connell to accuse Queen Victoria of 'impudence,' he laid all the blame on her majesty's ministers. The ministers had carried one coercive measure during the session—the Irish Arms Act—by which the possessors of arms were obliged to register them, to have them branded by the appointed government officer, and take out a licence for holding them. This act was brought forward at the request of a large number of orderly inhabitants of Ireland, who were compelled by the state of the times to keep arms enough for their own defence, but dreaded a seizure of them. There was little difference between this bill and many which had been passed for a long course of years—even up to the date of Lord Morpeth's bill of 1838; but it was made the ground of party conflict in the House. The debates were long and angry; and every conceivable Irish topic was brought into them. The bill, which had been first debated on the 29th of May, did not leave the Commons till the 9th of August. The Lords passed it rapidly; and it became law on the 22nd of the same month. It afforded a great subject to the agitator at the meetings.

But, by this time, two sorts of narratives of those meetings were getting abroad. According to the repealers themselves, the whole country was up, in one flame of patriotism, on occasion of a monster meeting—decorating houses and roads, carrying the crown-cap of the liberator, marching with solemn determination, as to a battle-field, bearing banners which demanded 'Repeal or blood,' and swearing on the ground to lay down their lives for the cause, in response to O'Connell's voice, which was heard to the bounds of the assemblage. On the other hand, it was

pointed out that no human voice could make its utterance heard by 100,000 people; the decorations were denied; the banners had not been seen; the people went to the stubble-field or hill smiling and chatting, as to a mere sight; and when there, they waited only for the arrival of O'Connell, when, having nothing more to stay for, they poured off in all directions, leaving a few hundreds within reach of the voices from the platform, to do the business of listening, feeling, and responding by cheers. There were, besides, Conservative reports which treated the movement with a contempt as absurd and forced as the exaggerations of the repealers. The government acted on the statements of the repealers themselves, who now talked of marshalling their 'troops,' and of their 'repeal cavalry;' and issued 'regulations,' in order to 'muster-march, and parade.' A monster meeting was appointed to be held at Clontarf, three miles from Dublin, on Sunday, the 8th of October; and the preparations assumed such a military air, that the government thought it time to interfere. On the 7th, about the middle of the day, a proclamation by the viceroy and privy-council was issued, which declared the public peace to be endangered by such practices as had taken place at late repeal meetings, and were contemplated now; warned all persons to abstain from attendance at the Clontarf meeting; and enjoined all official persons to be aiding in the suppression of the meeting. The agitator called together *his* council, spoke 'with marked calmness,' announced that in consequence of the proceedings of the government, there would be no meeting the next day, and entreated all persons to use their influence in preventing any assemblage. The association issued a proclamation, desiring the people to stay at home; and a large number of members volunteered to station themselves on the approaches to Clontarf, to turn back all comers. Early in the morning, the main strength of the garrison of Dublin was so placed on the field, as that all who arrived found themselves in a narrow lane between soldiers, and compelled to pass on by the pressure from behind. Nobody could find out where the hustings were. They had been removed in the night. Nobody could see O'Connell. He stayed away. Instead of him, there was

seen Thomas Steele, 'the head-pacificator of Ireland,' waving a green bough of peace, and moving over the ground, crying: 'Home—home—home!'

Of course, O'Connell declared now that this Clontarf meeting was to have been the last; and of course this was not believed by those who had charge of the public peace. Not only was there no reason why the agitator should stop at this particular meeting, but the government had sound reasons for thinking that he would not. It now appears that he was in a difficulty which had begun to weigh upon him, and under which he afterwards lost spirits and courage. He had called out the people, and now did not know what to do with them. He had accustomed them to political demonstrations as shows; and he must devise novelties to keep them amused and peaceable. It was probably an act of mercy in the government to stop him at this point of embarrassment. It is certain that his anxiety about keeping the peace was not surpassed by their own, when the affair had reached its present critical stage. Amidst the sudden hush of dismay, caused by the Clontarf proclamation throughout Dublin, O'Connell went about with an air of extreme calmness, and with an expression of countenance which, in unguarded moments, showed that his mind was now really harassed—no doubt by the pressing necessity of immediately striking out a new course.

In England, almost everybody was relieved and pleased that government had at last interfered with a procedure which was wholly incompatible with public peace and order under an established government. It had been observed that cabinet meetings had become frequent within a week; and that the viceroy, Lord De Grey, had repaired hastily to Dublin from London, instead of travelling into Yorkshire as had been planned. It had long been a question among men of all parties why O'Connell remained unchecked; and now that he proposed to muster his 'repeal cavalry' within three miles of the Irish capital, no one could say that the time for a check had not fully come. Why the thing was done hastily at last, so that the notice against assembling was perilously short, appears never to have been fully explained. It is

probable that some secret information reached the government which precipitated their measures.

On the Monday, O'Connell's words were watched for at the meeting of the Repeal Association. One of his topics was the cruelty of government in keeping the soldiers standing all day at Clontarf for nothing. He quizzed the viceroy, and complimented the soldiery and the people. He talked of simultaneous meetings all over Ireland, and of plans for buying up debts on Irish estates by an association of gentlemen; but these things were to be done hereafter, at some distant and unfixed time; and no indication appears of his having decided on any immediate course. He spoke of laying before the House of Commons, in the first week of the session, his scheme for an Irish parliament, but made no reference to his late declaration that 1843 was the great repeal year. It was now the 9th of October, and no progress had been made. There had been nothing but talk and show; and the educated people of Ireland, the great middle class, were as hostile as ever to repeal. The peasantry were the repeal host. They were truly formidable, on account of their sanguinary notions about slaying all the soldiers in the barracks, and massacring all the Saxons in the island, so that every true Irishman should 'have wheaten bread next year;' but they could not assist in the first step—forming a plan for obtaining repeal.

For a few days, Dublin was full of rumours of the arrest of O'Connell, though his portly form was daily seen in the streets. On the 14th, the rumour was true. He, his son, and eight of their coadjutors, were arrested on charges of conspiracy, sedition, and unlawful assembling. They were admitted to bail. This was the turning-point of O'Connell's life. It was at once observed that his anxiety for the public peace was extreme. His language became moderate; or, whenever it swelled into vehemence, it was from an evident agony of apprehension lest the multitude whom he had inflamed should break out into the violence which he had before indicated to them. Those who should know best have since declared that from this time his health began to fail; and that the word 'prison' caused him an anguish which he could not conceal. He issued

the most imploring and incessant entreaties to the people to keep perfectly quiet; and declared that he would never again use the term 'Saxon,' as he found that it gave offence. He caught at an offer from Mr. Joseph Sturge, of Birmingham, to aid the repeal cause, if he would confine his demand to a local legislature for merely local purposes, and would unite the British demand for universal suffrage with his own objects.

The proceedings began on the 2nd of November, in the Court of Queen's Bench in Dublin. From the first hour, it was evident that obstruction and delay were the policy of the accused. It was not till the 8th that the jury found the indictment 'a true bill;' and the trial was by various devices put off till the 15th of January. An unfortunate and disgraceful error occurred in the preparation of the jury-lists—two slips of the lists having been lost, and sixty-three names thus dropped by the way. There was much controversy as to whether this accident would prove fatal to the prosecutions; and there were disputes and delays about the exclusion of certain Catholics from the jury, and about every point that could be raised. If it was difficult to conduct jury-trial in Ireland in all party cases, it might be anticipated that it would be almost impossible in this critical instance, where it was difficult in the extreme to secure a fair jury. The practice of smuggling a jury on the one hand, and packing it on the other, was familiar to every man's expectation; and few or none believed it possible to find, in all Dublin, twelve dispassionate and impartial men on a question in which repeal was concerned. The community was sharply divided between those who adored, and those who hated, O'Connell. On the important 15th of January, when O'Connell and his son arrived at the Four Courts, conducted by the lord-mayor in his state-carriage, and escorted by twenty-three other carriages, the jurors drew back on various pleas—ill health, mistakes in the setting down of their Christian names, and other excuses. All but one paid the fine of £50; and he was excused on presenting an affidavit of ill health. One rheumatic old gentleman of seventy-two was compelled to serve; and it was noticed that great efforts were made by the lawyers of

the accused to keep on as many invalids as possible, evidently in the hope that some attack of illness might frustrate the trial. Then, two of the accused were absent; and the excuse presented for one of them was, that he lived four miles from town. When the court had waited long enough, and was about to forfeit his recognisances, he appeared, and everybody laughed.

There were few to laugh, however, when the Irish attorney-general made his statement. Though everybody had read about the repeal movement in the newspapers, for months past, everybody seemed now struck by the story as if it was new. It was a fearful story; and it left the impression on all minds that a rebellion like that of 1798 was impending. Those who did laugh as the trial proceeded were moved to it by the extraordinary character of the scene—the impudence, the recklessness, the buffoonery, which can hardly be conceived of by those who are accustomed to the gravity of an English court of justice. The case for the prosecution occupied eleven days; and after that, the aim of the accused, to wear out the jury, became even more evident than before. At length, on the twenty-fourth day, which was Saturday, February 10, there was every expectation that the verdict of the jury would be delivered before night. At seven o'clock, the chief-justice closed his charge, which produced a startling effect in court, from the grouping together of O'Connell's speeches of incitement, and of the threatenings of the repeal newspapers. The jury inquired whether it was necessary for them to proceed that night; they were extremely fatigued. They were not let off; and at half-past seven they retired. A little before eleven, they returned a verdict imperfect in form, and were sent back. At a quarter past twelve, they were called in, and informed that they must be locked up till Monday.

When the imperfect verdict was proffered, a vast crowd was assembled outside the Courts; and the news that the accused were all found more or less guilty was received with a terrific yell, which must have told on the nerves of some of the worn-out jurymen. A woman had that day entered the shop of one of them, and offered to sell his wife a widow's cap, saying that it would be needed, if the verdict

was against O'Connell. Between one and two o'clock in the morning, a company paraded the streets, apparently with a view to create a disturbance; but Dublin was full of soldiery, and all was kept quiet. A crowd gathered on Sunday morning, to see the jury go to church; but it was thought more prudent to have Divine service performed for them in their retreat. At nine o'clock on Monday morning, the court assembled. Mr. O'Connell was attended by a gentleman whose accession to the repeal cause was at that time hailed as one of its chief triumphs. Mr. William Smith O'Brien was a gentleman of ancient family, high respectability of character, amiable temper, and sufficient ability to have made a considerable impression in the House of Commons—where he sat as member for Limerick—by his speeches on the subject of Ireland; and especially by one, eminently rational and moderate, in the preceding session. It is no wonder that when he chose the moment of O'Connell's danger, and that of the cause, for joining it—before his fatal faults of mind and temper had been brought out by circumstances—his junction with the repealers was hailed by them with enthusiasm, and regarded by their opponents with feelings of apprehension which are now looked back upon with a melancholy smile. As he entered the court with the accused, this critical morning, no doubt his heart glowed with generous emotions, and he believed he was serving Ireland. None but those who knew him best could have believed, if it had been foretold to them, how his vanity would henceforth swell to bursting, and his small powers of judgment collapse, till he should close the new course on which he was now entering by plunging his poor countrymen into the miseries of abortive rebellion, and subjecting himself to the punishment of the felon, rendered more bitter by his own keen sense of what he must call the ingratitude of Irishmen. He now sat by O'Connell's side when, at ten o'clock, the jury entered with their verdict.

There were eleven counts in the indictment, and O'Connell was found guilty on them all; and, with the exception of some clauses here and there, so were all the accused, except the Rev. Mr. Tierney, the priest, who escaped lightly. O'Connell immediately issued an address

to the people of Ireland, in which he assured them that the event of his conviction would prove wholly favourable to the repeal cause, and concluded with the words : 'Keep the peace for six months, or at the most twelve months longer, and you shall have the parliament in College Green again.' Scarcely credible as it appears, it is true that multitudes even yet believed the promise. The news of O'Connell's conviction flew, like the winds, over all Ireland; and in Tipperary, the winter-night was lighted up with signal-fires on the hills.

It was the 30th of May before sentence was pronounced. Mr. Tierney escaped altogether. O'Connell was sentenced to a year's imprisonment, and a fine of £2000, and was bound in high recognisances to keep the peace for seven years. The others were sentenced, each to nine months' imprisonment, a fine of £50, and to find high security for future peaceable conduct. The lenity of this sentence probably took everybody by surprise. No one could say there was any vindictiveness in it; and merely as discipline, it was gentle. The best part of it—the binding over to keep the peace for seven years—the part which could not be openly complained of, was the most irksome; but no one could dispute its being necessary, if the proceedings were in any sense justifiable. The judge, Burton, who pronounced sentence, was so much affected as to be scarcely able to do his duty. Mr. O'Connell briefly protested that he was guiltless of conspiracy, and that justice had not been done. He was allowed to choose his place of imprisonment; and he chose the Richmond Penitentiary, in Dublin; and there he was conveyed. Proceedings were taken for a reversal of the sentence, and the writ of error immediately transmitted to London. In the prison, Mr. O'Connell was permitted to receive his friends; but their names were not allowed to be written down for publication, nor were deputations admitted to address the liberator. Mr. Smith O'Brien exerted himself to get this restriction removed; but the matter rested with the board of superintendents of the prison, and they did not yield; so the long trains of carriages rolled away from the gates as they came. The number of visitors was so great as to be fatiguing to the prisoner; but it was observed that his

health improved from week to week, and it was clear that his mind was relieved in his present inaction, under his temporary release from the fearful responsibility which he had taken upon himself, and which had latterly been too much for him. These were his last days of repose and peace of mind.

On the 12th of July, Lord Heytesbury was gazetted as lord-lieutenant of Ireland; Lord De Grey's feeble health incapacitating him for an office so arduous. When the new viceroy landed, and was presented with the keys of the city, it was observed that the ribbons were not, as hitherto, of party-colours, but 'sky-blue and white—emblems of peace, harmony, and love,' as a local paper interpreted them. The preceding Sunday was the day appointed for putting up a prayer for O'Connell in all the Catholic chapels; but there was an ominous difference among the priestly authorities about it. The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin interdicted the act, and was only partially obeyed. Meantime, the appeal of the prisoners was before the Lords. By the Lords, its points were referred to the twelve judges for their opinion. All the judges pronounced six of the eleven counts to be bad or informal, chiefly through the splitting of the charges by the jury in their verdict, in their anxious desire to be precise and accurate. They had, in fact, set up distinctions in the kinds of conspiracy which were not distinguished in the indictment. These six counts were declared unexceptionable by the Irish judges, and untenable by the English; a result which would scarcely improve the popular estimate of the administration of law in Ireland. Seven of the judges next opined that the judgment and sentence must stand, notwithstanding, as the Irish judges must know best upon how much of the verdict they grounded their judgment; and there was enough that was sound to justify the sentence. Two English judges dissented from this view; and the peers were now to decide between the opinions of the seven and the minority. Everybody seems to have taken for granted that the House of Lords would avail itself of every opportunity to confirm the sentence, and keep the agitator laid up. The repealers protested that they did not care; and such friends as they had in London

began to despise the Lords beforehand for their anticipated judgment. On the 6th of September, immediately before the prorogation of parliament, the law-lords delivered their opinions. Some of the peers, seeing the decision likely to go in favour of O'Connell, were eager to vote, instead of leaving the matter, as was just and decorous in an intricate question of legality, to the law-lords; but Lord Wharncliffe interposed to support the dignity of the House as a court of appeal, and induced the lay lords to retire without voting. The Earl of Verulam was the first who retired behind the woolsack; and all the lay lords present followed. Four peers remained. Lord Denman, Lord Cottenham, and Lord Campbell voted that the judgment of the court below should be reversed. Lord Brougham voted the other way.

The news of the reversal of the judgment, and the victory of O'Connell, was received by multitudes in England with a sort of consternation. But the most calm and clear-minded saw the matter at once as all learned by experience to regard it. It was not only that they kept in view the supreme importance of an impartial administration of the law. That would have been enough; but they also saw that this decision deprived O'Connell of his great theme—the injustice and oppression of 'the Saxon,' and the enslavement of the Irish under the imperial connection. It was by the imperial parliament that his appeal was justified, and his sentence dissolved; and it was the hand of benign justice herself that now heaped coals of fire on his head. Time confirmed this view. It was his release that broke the already anxious spirit of the agitator. If a shadow of doubt had rested on the strict legal justice of his punishment, he would have come out from his prison at the year's end, strongly armed in injury, to lay waste the country under a new term of agitation. As it was, he came out—however boastful and clamorous—in reality perplexed, anxious, and feeble. He never was like himself again, except on some single occasions. He was, and he felt himself, half-way down a precipice, uncertain whether to go up or down—unable to do either. His career was now virtually over.

Yet there was an external grandeur about his release. On the notification of his freedom being given him, he left

the prison on foot, with his sons and a few friends. He was recognised in the street, and escorted home by a crowd, whom he dismissed with a short speech from his balcony. The next morning early he went back to his prison, to be carried home in triumph. The whole city was abroad to see; and it was two hours from the time when the procession began to leave the gates, before the car could be brought up. The car—invented for the occasion, and never seen again but at his funeral—lifted him a dozen feet over the heads of the crowd. He stood at his full height, and was crowned with the repeal-cap. He was portly, and apparently in good health; but his countenance wore the anxious expression which was now becoming habitual to it. As for the rest, the show was vulgar enough; the grandsons of the agitator being on the lower platform of the car, in 'green velvet tunics, and caps with white feathers.' The best feature was perhaps the coach in which were the lawyers in the cause, carrying the 'monster indictment.' Mr. O'Connell closed the proceedings by an address from his balcony, in which he 'hoped it would not be necessary to hold the Clontarf meeting,' the principle of which was vindicated by the trials. He promised to open out his further plans at the Repeal Hall —whimsically called Conciliation Hall—on the next Monday. At that meeting, which was crowded and triumphant, Mr. W. Smith O'Brien 'rushed to the front of the platform, seized the liberator's hand, and shook it vigorously for some moments.' In return, Smith O'Brien's hand was pressed to the heart of the liberator; and the cheering and stamping were such that 'the very building quaked and trembled.' How soon was all this to appear a mockery! These fervent friends were soon to stand before the world as enemies—O'Brien striving to be a rival sun in the same hemisphere—O'Connell heaping contempt and foul names on O'Brien! O'Connell kept his promise of announcing 'plans' at Conciliation Hall. From this time, he was more fertile in 'plans' than ever; he was incessantly changing them. His language grew, if possible, bigger, his demonstrations more vulgar—with more green velvet, feathers, harps, wreaths, and old Irish costumes—and his monster meetings more enormous. He

was invited to England, and fêted there, and made use of for the anti-corn-law cause. But he was never really formidable again, and he knew it. He had no policy—no principle—nothing to repose upon; and only his ingenuity and audacity for a resource. A severe blow was struck at him towards the close of 1845—and his extreme violence showed how it told upon his heart—by an exposure of his deficiencies as a landlord. It became known—not by any hostile gossip, but by means of a full and authorised investigation into the facts—that this liberator, whose heart was wrung by the woes of Ireland, whose life was devoted to her redemption, was a middleman, pocketing three times as much rent drawn from a squalid peasantry, as he paid to the head-landlord; while also his own tenantry were in 'a lost, wretched, and neglected condition.' While holding forth patriotically against oppression, hundreds of miles from home, and drawing away the peasantry from honest industry to hear his vapourings about freedom and prosperity, and pay their only shilling in an imaginary cause, he was receiving rent from squalid wretches who wallowed with the pig, and were chilled under his roofs by the wintry wind, and would fain have shared the food of his beagles. He was furious at this exposure; but his hard words mattered little while hard facts were against him. Then he was seen in London streets, walking slowly and stooping, while supported by two of his sons; and members of the House complained that they could not hear his now short speeches, because of the feebleness of his voice. Then rumours arose of approaching famine in Ireland, and his sinking heart could not bear them. He was disturbed at the rise of the 'Young Ireland' party—the new section of repealers and liberators who were impatient for war, while he no longer talked of battle-fields, but grew more timid and perplexed from day to day. When the Whigs succeeded to the Peel government in 1846, and he was reinstated in the commission of the peace, and supported the Russell ministry, he was harassed and shaken by the scorn and enmity of 'Young Ireland,' who taunted him with having 'surrendered.' As the famine was seen surely to approach, all political action became out of the question. His physicians said he must be removed from the sight

and hearing of whatever would disturb him; and, if the later portraits of him are to be trusted, this was highly necessary. It is affecting to look on the heavy eye, and the mournful and wistful expression of countenance. He went to Hastings; and he did not mend, though the newspapers had paragraphs about his improving health, or health which needed no improvement. He desired that the newspapers might be kept from him, and all tidings of Ireland. No one was to be admitted who would speak of Ireland. He so watched the countenance of his physician when looking at his tongue, and was so alarmed by any gravity of countenance at the moment, that his physician had to remember to look cheerful and pleased. Next, he went abroad, hoping to reach Rome, and die under the blessing of the pope. But he sank too rapidly for this. He was carried to Paris, Marseille, Genoa; and then he could go no further. The final symptoms consequent on a long decay of the digestive functions came on, in May 1847; and on the 15th of that month, he died, his latest anxieties being lest he should be buried alive. He gave repeated warnings to his physicians and servant against this danger. His melancholy deepened to the last; and his only interest seemed to be in dependence on his confessor, and in repeating the prayers enjoined. On examination, the state of the brain explained his later moods. It was extensively diseased; and the disease, both there and elsewhere, must have been of long standing. This was a natural close of the life he had led—a life of strong passions, and intense and unremitted excitement, without the repose of a simple integrity; but it is not the less profoundly melancholy. Those who could least pretend to lament his disappearance from his mischievous position in Ireland, could not see without emotion the progress of the old triumphal-car through the streets of Dublin, bearing the silent remains of him whom multitudes still called by the name of liberator. The name has died already, and will be henceforth met with only in the chronicles of a past time. It is difficult now to find an educated Irishman who speaks of O'Connell with respect, or who denies that he set back Ireland half a century by his political action after 1829. But his name was a spell upon the

Catholic peasantry; and when the charm was dissolved, and the idol broken, there was no heart that was not aware of the melancholy which always attends the breaking of idols.

During the years when the repeal agitation was strongest, there were things doing in and for Ireland which afforded some hope on her behalf, even to those who saw most clearly the mischiefs of O'Connell's course, and were most indignant at them. The most essential good that could be rendered to Ireland—that which at least must precede every other—was an exposure of the fact that her miseries proceeded from moral and social, and not political causes. The famine was coming which was to do this good work in a harsh manner. While the famine was not foreseen, there was something extremely disheartening in O'Connell's pernicious mode of action, and in the rise of Young Ireland, with its political ignorance, its slaughter-house talk, and its bullying boasts—all so vulgar in the presence of the mournful greatness of the cause it professed to monopolise. But violence and ignorance and folly are, in their own nature, short-lived; and there was a lasting life in some institutions and methods and proposals on behalf of Ireland which were not extinguished by the repeal agitation.

The county of Derry was showing, according to its wont, what could be done by the application of industry and capital, among a mixed population of Catholics and Protestants, and under the much-abused union. On the estates of the London companies were seen 'good farmhouses, large squared fields, good fences, and abundant crops,' at the same date when, under an invited visitation, an inquirer was compelled to report: 'In no part of the United Kingdom is such neglected wretchedness—such filth, such squalor, such misery of every kind—to be seen, as I saw that day on Mr. O'Connell's estate, in the presence of Mr. Maurice O'Connell.' At the same date, Dr. Kane was asking whence such contrasts arise, and avowing 'the fault is not in the country, but in ourselves;' and he adds: 'We do not want activity; we are not deficient in mental power, but we want special industrial knowledge. This want was considered and met in the introduction of agricultural schools, whose benefits would be spreading over

the land when the union was no more talked of than it is in Scotland now. From the Templemoyle seminary, for one, young men were going forth every year, to reclaim or improve the land about their homes, and command good labour, and train to good habits, and produce conspicuous crops, and occupy the minds of the peasantry round them with something better than showy processions, and visions of battle-fields that would never be fought. It was already apparent that where these young men settled down, the quality of labour and of produce improved, the peasantry were better fed and lodged, and crime so diminished as that the police and soldiery went almost out of sight. Then there were agricultural associations which kept up the interest of the gentry, though they never sufficiently engaged the attention of the farmers. There was also the Irish Waste Land Improvement Society, which did more good to the peasantry, by compelling patient improvement of the soil, and patient learning how to improve it.

An important measure—a measure calculated to heal religious dissensions, and redress Catholic grievances—passed the legislature in the session of 1844—a measure for the better security and administration of charitable and religious trusts. It was introduced in the Lords, where it met with no obstruction. In the Commons, it was disputed, chiefly by the hot-headed Irish repeal members, who talked as usual of 'insult' and 'injustice' to Ireland; while their calmer comrades, and everybody else, saw that it was conceived and framed in a just and kind spirit, and must work benignly. At the beginning of the century, a board was appointed to administer charitable trusts; and the members were almost exclusively Protestants, while nearly three-fourths of the bequests placed under its jurisdiction were Roman Catholic endowments. By the new bill, three members of the board were to be dignitaries of the law, two of whom might be Catholics; and ten more commissioners were to be appointed by the crown, five of whom were to be Protestants, and five Catholics. Various imperfections of the existing law were so redressed as to give a preponderance at the board to the Catholic section where Catholic bequests were concerned. Mr. O'Connell

injured himself much with the most enlightened part of his Catholic countrymen by his opposition to this bill—an opposition which he grounded on his fears of the consequences of sending Catholics to the castle, and of sanctioning a connection of the Catholic Church with the state. On occasion of the third reading, Mr. Maurice J. O'Connell said, that 'he was bound to express his conviction that when the present heats had subsided, the bill would be found a substantial benefit to the people of Ireland, raising the condition of their clergymen, without shackling the influence exercised by them over their flocks.' In August, Mr. O'Connell declared that all befitting means should be taken to prevent the act going into execution, and intimated that it would never take effect if Roman Catholics refused the office of commissioners; yet, on the 21st of November, the *Dublin Evening Freeman* announced 'the first blow at the independence of the Catholic Church'—the rumour that Catholic prelates and laymen of respectability had consented to become commissioners. It was even so. The Catholic Primate of Ireland, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, and three more Catholics 'of respectability,' were gazetted as commissioners in December, together with four prelates and laymen of the Established Church, and one Presbyterian divine. The success of this healing measure, which brought the heads of the two churches together to watch over the interests of religion and charity, was a sore addition to Mr. O'Connell's perplexities, and a severe blow to his influence, by forcing him into collision with the chief-priests of his own communion.

During the same session, the lord chancellor united with a Catholic peer, Lord Beaumont, in obtaining the abolition of various penal acts against the Romanists, which, though obsolete, were an offence as they stood in the statute-book. The abolition of the office of lord-lieutenant was proposed, as a means of bringing Ireland into the same close union as exists between England and Scotland. Mr. Hume had striven for this object twenty years before, and he was as fully convinced as ever that the assignment of a viceregal government to Ireland gave that country a colonial appearance which was highly

disadvantageous. The frequent changes of administration in Dublin were a serious drawback upon good government. Instead of a responsible minister of the crown residing in London, there had been sixteen chief-secretaries for Ireland in the first thirty years after the union. A smaller consideration, but not an unimportant one, was the economy of the change. Mr. Hume moved an address to the queen, requesting her to consider of the abolition of the vice-royalty. The answer of Lord Eliot, the Irish secretary, was that the change would be inconvenient; that the Irish people did not desire it; and that the office was six hundred years old, whereas none such had existed in Scotland. Lord John Russell, upon this, pointed out that it had been in contemplation to appoint a separate council for Scotland; but that Lord Somers had maintained that such a council would prevent the union from ever being complete. There was opposition enough to induce Mr. Hume to withdraw his motion. His object will probably be carried out in an easy and natural manner—by such improvements in science and the arts as are already bridging the narrow sea, and bringing London and Dublin within easy hail of each other. When the English, from the queen to the commercial traveller, can visit Ireland as easily as Scotland, and London news can be heard as soon in Dublin as in Edinburgh, and a secretary of state in London can govern and protect the one as well as the other, it is pretty certain that the whole apparatus of the viceroyalty, about which the affections of the Catholic Irish certainly do not cling, will be swept away; and there will be one remainder the less of the tenure of conquest under which this special machinery of government was set down in the midst of the Irish people.

The subject of endowing the Roman Catholic clergy was much discussed throughout the country at this time. Loud and vehement declarations were uttered by the Irish political leaders in the name of the priests, and by many of the priests themselves, that nothing would ever induce them to accept of a shilling of endowment from Protestant hands; but numbers of thoughtful men believed then, as numbers of thoughtful men believe at this day, that, with time and patience, such a scheme would work.

The Protestant Church in Ireland is felt to be an intolerable grievance, in its existing preponderance. All attempts to reduce it to its fair proportions, and settle it in its true function, have failed; and the easiest way now seems to be to raise the depressed Church of the majority into a greater fitness for its function. As a missionary church, the Establishment has failed, and will evidently continue to fail. If the Catholic majority of the Irish people do not, and will not, enter it, the way which remains to enlighten and improve them is to elevate and improve the quality of their priesthood; a priesthood hitherto kept ignorant and dependent by the meagreness of their means of education, and by their absolute dependence on their flocks for subsistence. If a provision were once made for them by law, and the arrangement placed beyond dispute—if an annual sum for every priest were known to be lying at the banker's—it was the belief of the advocates of the endowment that the priests would take it; and there could be nothing in receiving a provision thus which could subject the recipients to any dangers of dependence comparable to those amidst which they were actually living. The example of foreign countries showed that there is no abstract objection in the minds of a Catholic priesthood to endowment by a Protestant state. The difficulty in the Irish case was purely political; and therefore likely to give way under a liberal and kindly political management.

The proposal of an increased grant to Maynooth College was regarded by many as a first step towards the object, though it might perfectly well stand by itself, as having important merits of its own. It was a great thing to provide for the improved education of the priesthood, whether or not this advantage was to be followed up by making them less dependent for subsistence on their peasant flocks. It was a great thing to raise them by education above the wish for vulgar and dangerous power over the people, whether or not the sordid part of the temptation was to be afterwards obviated. Sir R. Peel had the courage to propose, on the 3rd of April, 1845, that the parliamentary grant to Maynooth College should be enlarged so as, in some degree, to bear out the purpose of

making any grant at all. The institution had always been most meagrely supplied with comforts, and even with the necessaries of life; the professors were paid less than counting-house clerks; and at present the distress of the times had materially reduced the contributions of the middle classes, who paid for the education of their sons. It would be better to withdraw all pretence of government support than to let the college go on in this way; and it was a question how money could be better spent than in really educating the students who were to be—whether well or ill qualified—the future guides and guardians of the Catholic population of Ireland. It seems as if no great courage could be required to propose such an augmentation of the annual grant to Maynooth as to make it worth while to award any grant at all. But it did require great courage; and there was scarcely any act of his bold administration for which the premier was more vituperated than for this. It was the great political controversy of the year—the subject on which society seemed to be going mad. It was not the extent of the grant that was deprecated; but the advance in that direction at all. Hitherto, the grant had been £9000; and the trustees had been authorised to hold land to the amount of £1000 per annum; but this could never be done, because the trustees were never incorporated. They were now to be incorporated, and permitted to hold land to the amount of £3000 per annum. The sum of £6000 was to be granted for professors' salaries, which would henceforth be large enough to yield comfort and respectability, and therefore to secure a higher order of qualification than could hitherto be commanded. At present, the number of students was 440. It was proposed to make adequate allowances to 500 students. The annual grant would thus be raised from £9000 to £26,360. As it would be necessary to enlarge the college, and it was most desirable to render it more comfortable and cheerful than at present, the sum of £30,000 was asked for, as a special grant, the needful repairs being henceforth provided for by an annual vote. There was nothing in this that ought to have alarmed a people and parliament accustomed to make an annual grant to Maynooth. It

seems a matter of mere prudence to provide thus far for the decent education and bare comfort of a body of 500 priests, who were certain to have more influence over the Irish people than all other persons together. Yet the public consternation was excessive. The Dissenters pushed an opposition almost as loud and formidable as on the factory-education clauses. Public meetings to remonstrate against the measure were held over the whole kingdom—a violent one at the London Tavern leading the way. Upwards of a hundred of the merchants, bankers, and traders of London signed the requisition for this meeting. The first resolution declared the proposed grant to be a renunciation of the Protestantism under which the empire had flourished; and the mover took upon him to declare that the grant was 'directly opposed to the revealed will of the Creator.' The Dublin Protestant Operative Association demanded the impeachment of the prime-minister. Some members of parliament were called on by their constituents to resign their seats; and the table of the House groaned under the mass of petitions against the measure. The truth was, this measure was an express discountenancing of the 'Protestant ascendency' in Ireland; while in England it at once provoked the fears of the vast body of Dissenters about the spread of the Romish faith, and their jealousy about government endowments of religion. Not a few advocates of the measure were heard to say that it was now becoming necessary to endow all ministers of every faith and denomination. The external agitation was reflected within the walls of parliament in a debate of three nights in the Lords, and six in the Commons, on the second reading of the bill. It passed, however, on the 16th of June, amidst protests from five bishops and three lay peers, who objected to it on the grounds that it provided for the maintenance of religious error, and for opposition to the Reformation; and that it countenanced the notion that religious truth was a matter of indifference to the state.

A more important measure, tending to the great object of abating religious rancour in Ireland, met with resistance from an opposite quarter. In the royal speech at the opening of the session, the sovereign recommended to the

best consideration of parliament 'the policy of improving and extending the opportunities for academical education in Ireland.' The ministers were prepared with their plan, which was brought forward by Sir James Graham, on the 9th of May. The national education system in Ireland was working well; but its host of 400,000 pupils included only children, and, as yet, children of the poorer classes, though it was extending upwards. It was desirable to enable those who had sat side by side on the school-benches, as yet untouched by the religious bigotry which was the curse of the country, to continue the education which had begun so favourably; and also to provide for the same harmony being extended to all classes of society. The government therefore proposed the establishment of three colleges, in the north, west, and south of Ireland, in which a liberal and comprehensive academical education should be opened to young men of every religious denomination, without distinction. There could, of course, be no theological professorships founded by the government; but every facility was afforded for the voluntary establishment of such in connection with the colleges. As for the question whether these new colleges should be incorporated into a new university, or whether Trinity College, Dublin, should, without invasion of her present Protestant rights, be enabled to admit the new colleges into incorporation with her as a university—this was for parliament to decide upon. After much debate, earnest but less violent than that on the Maynooth question, the measure was carried, by a vote of 177 to 26 in the Commons, and without a division in the Lords—the question of the university arrangements being left over till the views of the governing powers of all the colleges could be obtained. The bigots among the Catholic clergy were the foes in this case. The cry about 'godless' education was loud, and has been long.

The new institutions have ever since gone by the name of the 'godless' colleges among the fanatics of the Romish faith, and some few of the Protestant Church; and by much painstaking, and prodigious misrepresentation, the less enlightened of the Catholic priesthood at length obtained from the conscientious but weak pope, Pius IX., a

rescript against these colleges, as places of education of the Catholic youth of Ireland. The measure was, and is, however, all-important as throwing the *onus* of religious exclusiveness on the Catholic portion of society in Ireland; and as a distinct pledge that the imperial government was at last exercising an impartial sway over its subjects of differing faith. The sum proposed for the erection of the three colleges was £100,000; for their maintenance—that is, the salaries of officers, and the prizes for the encouragement of learning—£18,000 per annum. In each college there was to be a principal, with a salary of £1000; and ten or twelve professors, with salaries of £300 a year, Residences were not provided; but the principal of each college would live within the walls; and the modes of residence of the students were to be under safe regulation, under the act. The power of appointment and removal of the professors was to rest with the crown, as was obviously fitting in a case which involved party-feelings to so great an extent. The preparations for these new institutions were immediately begun. It must be left for time to show how they work.

In February of this year, a report was presented by the commissioners of inquiry, sent out in 1843, to investigate the law and practice in respect to the occupation of land in Ireland. Much expectation was excited by the appointment of the Devon commission—as it was called, from the Earl of Devon being at the head of it—and the expectation was kept up by the eagerness of multitudes of persons connected with the proprietorship and occupation of land in Ireland, to give evidence before the commission. They came in crowds to tell what they knew, and thought, and felt; and it was hoped that now, at last, light would be obtained as to what was to be hoped and feared, and what could be done. The information obtained was extensive and valuable; and large practical use might soon have been made of it, in the form of proposed legislation, but that the famine was approaching, which put aside all considerations but how to prevent the whole rural population from dying of hunger. Though the time has not arrived for making use of the disclosures of this report, and though much of it may be actually superseded by the

operations of calamity, it remains a token of solicitude for the regeneration of Ireland on the part of the ministers in office during its preparation.

During the decline of Mr. O'Connell's power, and the rising conflict between his repeal-party and that which was to be headed by Mr. W. Smith O'Brien, while want was becoming aggravated, and famine was approaching, the amount of outrage in Ireland increased so grievously, that ministers introduced a Coercion Bill early in the session of 1846. The bill was framed strictly for the protection of quiet members of society—permitting the viceroy to award compensation to the maimed, and to the families of the murdered, under the attacks at which the measure was aimed. Under it, disturbed districts might be proclaimed, and night-meetings within them prevented. The bill passed the Lords easily, but was vehemently disputed, and at last lost, in the Commons, where party-feeling ran high amidst the final agitation about the corn-laws, and the hopes and fears about the going out of the Peel ministry. It was generally understood that the defeat of ministers on this Coercion Bill—so mild of its class—was occasioned by a combination of parties; and the speeches of Lord G. Bentinck and Mr. Disraeli, universally reprobated for their spirit, were regarded as manifestations of the real reasons of the result. At the moment when the Corn-law Repeal Bill was passing the Lords, the second reading of the government bill for Ireland was refused by a majority of 292 to 219, after a delay of five months, which would have been seriously injurious to the operation of the bill, if it had passed. The division took place on the 26th of June, three days before the announcement of the retirement of the Peel administration—a retirement which might have been rendered necessary by the failure of this measure, if it had not been, as was well known, determined beforehand, as a natural consequence of the carrying of the measure for which Sir R. Peel had returned to power —the repeal of the corn-laws.

We must look further back for the deciding cause of the retirement of the Peel administration. Before the end of 1845, it was clear that the potato-crop in Ireland was likely to be utterly destroyed by blight. Men whose vision

was bounded by political party-spirit endeavoured to persuade others as well as themselves, that the avowed alarm of the cabinet for the food of half a nation was little more than a device to get the corn-laws repealed with the least possible difficulty; but men of more enlightenment and a more simple conscience had faith in the earnestness of the minister, in the reality of his solemnity, in the sincerity of the solicitude which marked his countenance and his voice, and in the truth of the abundant evidence which he laid before parliament of the probable extent of the approaching calamity. It was all too true. The work of preparation for a new age for Ireland was taken out of human hands; and a terrible clearance of the field of Irish soil and society was about to be made for the efforts of future apostles, and the wisdom of future legislators. The virtues of two parties of rulers were not, however, to be in vain. Under them the great truth had appeared that the causes of Irish misery were not political, but social; and both had done what they could to purge out the spirit of religious and political rancour which had hitherto poisoned every public benefit, and aggravated every social woe, of that unhappy country.

CHAPTER IX.

Church Patronage in Scotland—The Veto Law—The Auchterarder Case—The Strathbogie Case—Position of the Church Party—Lord Aberdeen's Bill—The General Assembly—Its Memorial—Reply of Government—*Quoad Sacra* Ministers—Petition of the Assembly—Failure—Preparations for Secession—The Secession—Counter Proceedings—Act of Separation—Spirit of the Movement—The Religious World in England—Troubles in the Church—Oxford—Tractarian Secession—Death of Dr. Arnold—Death of Sydney Smith—Augmentation of Clergy—Colonial Bishoprics—Consolidation of Sees—Struggles of Government and Church—Dissenters' Chapels Bill—Relief to Jews.

THE ecclesiastical disturbances, whose beginnings have been noticed, were by this time becoming of the gravest import. Scotland was affording as complete an exemplification as the world has seen of the perplexities attendant

on an alliance between the Church and the State. At the date before us, events were occurring which tested the merits of a scheme concocted by Harley, Bolingbroke, and Swift, in the palace of Queen Anne. By an act of 1711, the power of free choice, the *liberum arbitrium*, as to the appointment of pastors in the Scotch Church, was taken from the church-courts, by subjecting the power of the presbytery to the interpretation, and even control, of the civil courts. The minority of the General Assembly of that time approved of the act, which fulfilled their idea of the connection of Church and State. The majority protested against it, from year to year; but the protest, being of no avail, at length became little more than a form. The leading men of the time, the philosophers and men of letters, who represented Scotland to English eyes, were not earnest Churchmen—not earnest about religion at all; and the arrangement of 1711 suited their views very well, as being moderate, decorous, and tending to peace. They did not see what was going on, wherever a pastor whom the flock did not like was forced upon them. In a multitude of parishes, the patron nominated the minister; if the presbytery found him unexceptionable in 'life, literature, and doctrine,' they were then obliged to appoint him, however unacceptable he might be to the flock. There were many ways in which a minister, with whose 'life, literature, and doctrine' no fault could be found, might be unfit for the care of a particular parish. He might have a weak voice, or too much scholarship for a rustic congregation, or he might have town ways and ideas, or he might not speak Gaelic where the people understood little English. In such cases, the people would turn to the Voluntaries, and become Dissenters. We have before seen how dissent abounded in Scotland at the period of the Melbourne ministry, and how virulently the High-Churchmen of the Kirk regarded the Voluntaries, who claimed to be, and were, considerably more than half the nation. In 1834, an effort had been made to recover the power which had been taken from the Church by the act of 1711; and apparently it succeeded. But the power of the State was not to be cast out from the Church so easily as at first appeared; and the Church found itself compelled to advance,

or assert new claims. In the quarrel about these, the Establishment was rent in twain, and the Church of Scotland became a warning and a sign of the fate of all churches which have made the effort to maintain at once an alliance with the state and the principles of the Reformation.

The progress of dissent was so rapid after 1820 that the earnest members of the Kirk took it much to heart. Wherever they turned, in hope of bringing back the Voluntaries to the Church, they were met by the objection that the people preferred choosing their own pastors to having them nominated, in a compulsory way, by a lay-patron, who might or might not, according to his temper, listen to any objections on the part of his flock to his nominee. The earnest Churchmen saw that this lay-patronage must be got rid of; and petitions for its abolition so poured in upon parliament, that a select committee of the Commons was appointed in 1834 to consider the subject. The same agitation wrought in another direction—giving a large majority of non-intrusion members to the General Assembly, in which they had hitherto been the minority. While the committee of the Commons was sitting, the General Assembly passed an enactment, containing a declaration and a rule. The declaration was, that it was a 'fundamental law' of the Church that no pastor should be intruded on any congregation, contrary to the will of the people; and a rule was prescribed, by which the will of the people might be ascertained and manifested. A veto on the nomination was afforded to them. This is the celebrated Veto Act. Those who passed it professed to believe it to be perfectly compatible with the act of 1711; it was also declared to be so by the law-officers of the crown, and emphatically praised by the lord chancellor, who pronounced it to be 'in every respect more desirable than any other course that could have been taken.' For five years, the Veto Act worked so well that it is no wonder if those who devised and passed it supposed that the matter was settled, and that the Church had indeed recovered her powers. When the minority in the Assembly saw how acceptable a body of ministers—250 in the five years—was settled under this act, they first learned to approve it, and then to avow their approbation. The tendency to dissent

was supposed to be subsiding, and the Scotch clergy instituted the movement for church extension which was described in a former chapter of our history.

There were secular persons, however, who were not satisfied to see the power of appointment to parishes dependent on the pleasure of the majority of the communicants. This dependence lessened the value of patronage, and, as these persons thought, its dignity; and they were by no means clear that the power given to the communicants by the Veto Act was compatible with the act of Queen Anne. They were disposed to try the fact; and occasions for such an inquisition soon offered.

Lord Kinnoull presented a Mr. Young to the parish of Auchterarder. The heads of families in the congregation did not like the appointment, and vetoed it. The presbytery were ordered to take him on trial. They refused to do so, on the plea that he could not be ordained because the ecclesiastical conditions relating to his call by the people had not been fulfilled. Mr. Young applied to the Court of Session and the House of Lords to grant him both the civil benefice and the cure of souls. The decision of the civil courts was, that the presbytery must take him on trial, as he was competent in the three prescribed conditions—of life, literature, and doctrine; and the acts of the Kirk were not binding upon them. The Assembly did not contest this decision, as far as its civil relations went. They surrendered the stipend, house, and external privileges to the patron and his nominee. This was in May 1839.

The Church thus found that there really was an incompatibility between the act of 1711 and their veto law of 1834. The thing to be done now was to maintain the principle of non-intrusion, and endeavour to induce the legislature to modify the statute so as to bring the civil law into accordance with the conscience of the Church. While requesting this reform from the legislature, the Church acted mildly in regard to the veto law, suspending operations under it till the difficulty should have been accommodated. For two or three years no progress whatever was made; and through this delay circumstances arose which induced a more serious claim on behalf of the

Church, and converted the whole affair into one of vital opposition.

When the judgment in the Auchterardor case went against the Church, and in favour of the lay-patron, no demand was made on the presbytery and the people to receive Mr. Young. When the fruits of the benefice were given up to him, they were left unmolested, and not required to surrender the spiritual freedom they held of declining the services of an unacceptable pastor. But, as there had been parties who had instituted a trial of the question thus far, so there were other parties who now resolved to push the experiment further, and ascertain what the connection between the Church and the State really was. The presbytery of Strathbogie had of old been celebrated for its zeal for the civil power, its loyalty to the sovereign, and its leaning towards Episcopacy; and now it was the scene of the decisive struggle between the powers of the Church and the State. In the parish of Marnoch, a Mr. Edwards had been assistant to the minister for three years, and was then nominated for minister, on the pulpit becoming vacant. He was so unacceptable, that the call—the forms of which were preserved all this time—was signed by only one parishioner, while 261 out of 300 heads of families on the roll of communicants dissented. The one parishioner who signed the call was a publican; and he lost his business immediately. The court next above the presbytery—the Synod of Moray—directed the presbytery to reject Mr. Edwards; but they did not do so till ordered by the highest authority of all, the General Assembly. When they had done it, an acceptable minister was presented. But Mr. Edwards obtained an interdict from the Court of Session against the settlement of the second nominee, and a declaration that the presbytery were bound to take Mr. Edwards himself on trials. The members of the presbytery were now in the painful position of being under contradictory orders from the General Assembly and the Court of Session—from the Church and the State. The General Assembly and its adherents took for granted that the members of the presbytery ought to consult their spiritual superiors how to proceed; but such a consultation would have been of itself a surrender of the

question. The seven members of the presbytery determined for themselves to obey the civil power; and they admitted Edwards to trials. They were brought to the bar of the General Assembly, where Dr. Chalmers moved for their deposition from the holy ministry. Dr. Cook, the leader of the State party in the Church—'the Moderates,' as they were called—moved that the seven ministers at the bar should be dismissed, and confirmed in their present rank in the Church. Dr. Chalmers obtained a majority of 97 in an assembly of 347; and the Strathbogie ministers were sentenced to deposition. Their parishes were declared vacant; and Mr. Edwards was to be deprived of his licence as a minister of the Church.

The seven deposed ministers appealed to parliament; and their case was brought forward by Lord Aberdeen on the 15th of June 1841. Lord Melbourne let everybody see that he did not understand the matter: he had promised, certainly, to maintain the law, and he had no doubt the lord advocate would see that it was done; these were very difficult questions, but they seemed to him to lie within the Church entirely: and then he spoke so of the arrogance of the Church of Scotland, as to set the lords laughing. Lord Haddington rebuked the vacillation and indifference of the premier, declaring that it was owing to the weakness of the government—its carelessness or hesitation—that the divisions in the Scotch Church had become what they were. The concluding statement of the premier was, that the government really meant to execute the law; and that the best way of doing that was to leave the law to execute itself. For want of a few words of earnest declaration of the intentions of government, however, the impression was very general that the ministry were somewhat daunted by the imposing attitude of the ecclesiastical chiefs in Scotland, and disposed to leave the affair as much as possible to be managed in the Scotch courts.

The deposed ministers obtained an interdict forbidding all preachers of the Kirk from entering their pulpits. The Assembly forthwith deputed one of their chief members to go and preach there, and encourage various ministers to officiate in those parishes regularly and perseveringly; thus compelling their licentiates to break the

civil law, because their predecessors had broken their ecclesiastical law. Penalties hung over the heads of the preaching substitutes; and penalties had been imposed on those whom they superseded. This state of things could not last or be endured. The number of public meetings which took place all over Scotland, and the vehemence of the speakers on both sides, began to be a significant warning to parliament, that talking and laughing, and even wrangling, were no longer serious enough for the occasion. In truth, the reader of the newspapers of that time feels little inclination to smile, even in the midst of the extreme wonder which he feels at the point which party-spirit can reach. The evidences of wrath and hatred are too strong, and the mutual imputations too shocking, to leave room for any amusement. To an impartial reader it appears that there never was a case in which men might more reasonably hold opposite opinions. The case was one of difficult decision to the wisest; for the perplexity lay deep in an abyss of compromise, and by no means within the grasp of passion and partisanship. The language used in regard to the Church leaders on the one hand, and Mr. Edwards and the seven Strathbogie ministers on the other, was, however, as violent as can ever have been used about monsters of vice. Such language led, as was natural, to violence of another kind. The pious attendants at church on critical occasions, and at public meetings, pelted one another with snow and with stones; and here and there, there was fighting enough to call for the interference of the police. The gravest thinkers, and men of the highest conscientiousness, saw more clearly, from month to month, that there was no alternative for the Church party but to withdraw from their connection with the State. The choice lay merely between this and the surrender of the spiritual powers of the Church. They had staked everything on their position, that the providing ministers for the people was a spiritual concern, though the disposal of the emoluments was a secular one. The State would not recede from its legal function of supporting patronage; and the ecclesiastical party must therefore separate its function from its partnership with the civil law.

When this result was evidently becoming necessary, Lord

Aberdeen, a member of the Peel ministry, which was now in power, made one last effort to preserve the unity of the Scotch Church by a bill, intended to remove doubts respecting the admission of ministers to benefices in Scotland. A similar bill, about which Lord Aberdeen and Dr. Chalmers had misunderstood one another, had been proposed and withdrawn in 1840. It was not likely now, after three years of strong warfare, to be well received by Dr. Chalmers and his followers; and it was hardly intended for them, but rather for the large body of clergy who were unwilling to leave the Establishment, and yet must have a clear settlement of their consciences, by a distinct knowledge of their case, if they were to remain. In 1840, 400 ministers and 2000 elders had declared in favour of the bill; but now, though it passed through parliament, it was too late to affect materially the condition of the Church. It provided that the presbytery to which any case of unacceptable nomination should be referred, should have power to inquire into the circumstances of the parish, and the number and character of objectors; and if the objectors should appear to be in the right, the presbytery had power to refuse to admit the nominee, being obliged, however, to specify the grounds of their decision. Next, the veto was abolished, being rendered unnecessary by the foregoing provision. In regard to the qualifications of a candidate, the appeal must lie to the church-courts alone, as the civil courts could not have any concern with such a matter. The civil courts were, however, to hold themselves in readiness to interfere, in case of any excess of jurisdiction on the part of the church-courts. It was clear to all who saw how far the controversy now transcended the veto question, that Lord Aberdeen's Bill was no longer what the times required. It did nothing towards determining the province of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction on any ground of principle. Several of the lords objected that it pronounced virtually against the decision in the Auchterarder case, and that it was inconsistent with the existing law of Scotland. The pleas in its favour all related to the necessity of allaying excitement in Scotland; and high legal authorities were adduced, which declared the bill to be strictly in accordance with the law of Scotland, and

with the decision upon the Auchterarder case; and thus was there as much to be said on both sides among the lawyers as among the excited population in the north. It was the last day of July before the bill was discussed in the Commons, after its passage through the Lords' House. The thinness of the House showed that even yet the full importance of the subject was not understood. Mr. Fox Maule, who ought to know, said that the Church party, now called the seceders, took scarcely any interest whatever in the bill; and when Sir R. Peel resorted to quotations from speeches in the Assembly about reliance on the government for interference for the settlement of consciences, he was describing a time long gone by, and a state of affairs which could never be renewed. It mattered little now, as regarded the immediate difficulty, whether the bill passed or not. It became law on the 17th of August.

We have said that the Church party were now called the seceders. The time had indeed come. The Scotch Church was divided into irreconcilable parties. The incidents which led on to the secession were these.

At the last meeting of the General Assembly in 1842, two addresses to the crown had been proposed and agreed upon; one of which invited the attention of her majesty to the encroachments of the Court of Session on the spiritual jurisdiction of the Church; and the other prayed that the sovereign would order measures towards the abolition of church-patronage in Scotland. A memorial to the cabinet was also prepared; to which Sir James Graham replied in a letter issued on the 4th of January 1843. This was a letter of reasoning comment on the memorial sent in to ministers; and it presents a clear account of the government view—the view of 'the Moderates'—of the whole case. It occasioned much anger, and was spoken of with scorn—this 'chopping of logic while the Church was falling in pieces'—this fiddling while the burning was going on; but it is evident that the party would have been more angry, and with better cause, if Sir James Graham had given a peremptory and unreasoned reply. The document ended with a clear declaration of government intentions. Government had

been willing to attempt legislation, in a hope of a settlement; but 'the acts of the General Assembly . . . . have unhappily diminished, so far at least as the Church is concerned, these reasonable hopes; and her majesty's ministers, now understanding that nothing less than the total abrogation of the rights of the crown and of other patrons will satisfy the Church, are bound with firmness to declare that they cannot advise her majesty to consent to the grant of any such demand.' This letter must be answered; and circumstances occurred in the Assembly which allowed the Church party to have all their own way in answering it. It was a matter of contention in the Assembly, and also before the civil courts, whether a certain class of the clergy, called *quoad sacra* ministers—being the incumbents of non-parochial churches—should have the position and privileges of parochial ministers. As the judges differed on this point, it was no wonder that the Assembly divided eagerly upon it. Five of the judges sanctioned the claim of the *quoad sacra* ministers, and eight rejected it. Their opinion was declared on the 20th of January. On the 31st, the Assembly, constituting itself a commission, was to resolve on a reply to Sir James Graham. Dr. Cook, the leader of the Moderates, moved the exclusion of the *quoad sacra* ministers who were present, as disqualified by law from sharing in the business. Dr. Cook's motion was negatived by a majority of 92; and the mover, with his minority, retired from the meeting whose proceedings could not be legal. A committee was formed by those who remained, for the purpose of preparing a petition to parliament, which was presented by Mr. Fox Maule, in the Commons, on the 7th of March. The House, after a debate of two nights, decided by a vast majority—211 to 76—against appointing a committee to consider the petition. Not only the result, but the tone of the debate, showed the Church party that they had nothing more to hope for from parliament. Everybody spoke respectfully and decorously of the Church of Scotland; but nobody, except the members of the government and a few other speakers, seemed to know or care what the controversy was about. The House was quiet, but indifferent. Members were conscious of their ignorance, and had no

hope of clearing up their minds by means of a single debate; so they sat still, and probably wished the matter over. One keen disappointment to the Church party was that Lord John Russell went against them on this occasion, after having seemed to admit their claims in a letter to his Scotch constituents of the city of London. It was not likely that the Whigs, who never showed themselves clear or decided on the question when they were in power, should have mastered the subject now; but the Church party attributed the change in Lord J. Russell's tone to his having received false information about the spirit and purposes of the Church party. It was believed that he was misled by some 'Scotch Liberals,' who declared, only one week before the secession, that the number of ministers who would give up their endowments would not exceed six.

Far indeed was this from the truth, as was seen when the memorable 18th of May 1843 arrived. From the hour when the decision of parliament became known, the non-intrusion party pushed their preparations vigorously. Lecturers traversed all Scotland, canvassing for support for the Free Presbyterian Church, about to take its place in opposition to the Church of Scotland. A fund was to be raised for the erection of churches and the support of ministers. Missionary objects were naturally united with the primary aim of protesting against the usurpation of the State over the Church. 'We shall indeed,' said Dr. Candlish, on the 21st of March, 'cultivate our own districts; we shall have stated congregations, with stated elders and ministers; but we shall have our tours of preaching too—our visits to all-comers of the land; and I believe that yet, by God's blessing on our free and faithful preachings, in the highways and hedges, in barns and stables, in saw-pits and tents, we shall yet regenerate Scotland, and have multitudes of those who are now perishing for lack of knowledge to listen to the glad tidings of salvation.' Though the season was one of severe commercial distress, £300,000 were subscribed in a few months for the support of the Free Church.

The next important matter was the election of commissioners to the General Assembly. The *quoad sacra*

ministers had but little chance of election after the decision of the majority of the judges on their claims. A persuasion prevailed that the Moderates would have all their own way in the Assembly. The 18th of May would show.

The windows along the way were crowded on that day; and so was the gallery of St. Andrew's Church, where the Assembly held its sittings. The non-intrusion members were cheered as they entered. One of their leaders, Dr. Welsh, moderator of the former Assembly, took the chair. After prayer, he did not, as is usual, proceed to make up the roll, but instead, read the protest in which the non-intrusion members had recorded the grounds of their secession from the Assembly, and from alliance with the State. It was an act of excellent temper, taste, and prudence, in the seceders then to withdraw, without seeking controversy. To the number of 169 they took their hats, and walked out of the church. As the foremost of them appeared at the door, the crowd in the streets set up a cheer; and the cheering continued, with few pauses, and only the disturbance of a few hisses, all the way to a hall at Canonmills, where 300 more seceding clergy and a large and sympathising auditory awaited them. In Dr. Chalmers' ensuing address, he took the pains which might be expected from him to explain that the seceders were not Dissenters. They left a vitiated establishment, but adhered to the Church, and claimed to be a more real Church than that which remained Established. This was true now, as it had been true in regard to ancient secessions; and, as in their case, the matter will probably end, after a few years of protests against Voluntaryism, in the Free Churchmen being numbered among the Voluntaries of Scotland. On the 20th, there was a demonstration which somewhat derogates from the dignity of the occasion. The Marchioness of Breadalbane was received in the hall with loud cheers. In the course of proceedings this day, complaints were made that great landed proprietors would not grant the smallest portion of ground for new churches; but the zealous leaders declared that an old vessel here and there, moored along the shore, and tents that could be carried from place to place, would

serve their needs. On the next day, Sunday, the first secession church, which had been built in six weeks, was opened; and neither it, nor the hall where Dr. Chalmers preached, nor the church attended by the queen's high-commissioner, could contain the eager crowds that resorted to them. On the next day, the 22nd, the General Assembly made haste to undo the acts of the seceders—excluding the *quoad sacra* ministers, though with kindly wishes for their admission under a parochial right, and reinstating the seven Strathbogie ministers. Then followed the deposition of the seceders, and the declaration that their parishes were vacant. On the same day, the seceders, formed into an assembly of their own, renounced their brethren of the Establishment in much the same mode. An Act of Separation, now known as the *Disruption*, was decreed; and on the next day, it was produced for signature, previous to its being transmitted to the assembly. Prayer preceded and followed the signing of the act—four hours being occupied in affixing the signatures. An address to the queen was passed, and much business in connection with their new position transacted; and then, having agreed to hold another assembly in October, at Glasgow, the meetings dissolved. The General Assembly was also dissolved on the 29th—a day on which many a heart throbbed, and many an eye was moistened, at the thought that all was now over, and the beloved and venerated old Kirk of Scotland rent in twain.

The noble and animating feature of this ecclesiastical revolution is that which is found on all such occasions—the disinterestedness of the movers. Of that heroic disinterestedness there never was, or could be, any question. The seceders were violent in their partisanship, and unjust in their judgments of those whom they left behind: they had the faults of a revolutionary era; but their earnestness and their spirit of self-sacrifice were sublime. As early as that memorable May week, there were 500 clergy, who had left home, neighbours, station, and competence, and thrown themselves into a position where they might have to endure poverty for the rest of their lives, and could not escape much tribulation and toil. And they were well supported by a host as earnest as themselves—by men

and women who were ready to spend and be spent in the cause. While the difficulties remained which were occasioned by the refusal of landowners to grant sites for churches, aged men and tender women attended worship, like the old Covenanters, in frost and rain—under the tempests and heats of summer, and the blasts and snows of winter, on the sea-shore, in the wild ravine, and on the exposed hillside. Several of the large proprietors held out for a long time, naturally doubting whether they ought to grant aid of any kind to parties who had, as they supposed, set up against the government and the law-courts. But these not only became better aware of what is due to religious liberty, but took warning from the frequent rising up of the question, what right any man could have to hold land so as to keep back God's earth, to the last corner, from worshippers who wanted merely space to kneel on. When it was seen that this High-Church movement might generate an agrarian agitation, the seceders were indulged with a choice of sites for their churches.

Thus did Scotland lead the way in proving the principle of Church Establishments, in alliance with the state. There is a general feeling that the affair is not over—that the Establishment in Scotland now remains a mere temporary arrangement; and that the Establishment in England and Ireland must sooner or later come into question in somewhat a similar way.

In the English Establishment, the disturbances whose first outbreak has been described, became more threatening and more painful from year to year. It could not be otherwise; for the differences between the three parties in the Church were fundamental; and their controversies must be brought to an issue before unity and tranquillity could be restored. One of the most significant circumstances in connection with the religious state of the nation is that dissent appears to have gained nothing by the divisions in the Establishment. While the High-Churchmen were mourning over the certain destruction of the Church from the interference of the government with it; and while the Low-Church party were denouncing the influence of the world, and struggling to revive religion

by building churches—as if the spirit could be created by forms, instead of forms being the manifestation of the spirit; and while Dr. Arnold was writing: 'I groan over the divisions of the Church . . . . . I begin now to think that things must be worse before they are better, and that nothing but some great pressure from without will make Christians cast away their idols of sectarianism—the worst and most mischievous by which Christ's Church has ever been plagued;' while such were the lamentations of Churchmen of every order, we find the Dissenters stating, with solemn grief, in their annual reports, that their numbers and their zeal were fearfully declining. At the Wesleyan Conference in 1845, the decrease of members was declared to exceed 5000. The New Connection of Wesleyans announced a decrease also, and directed an inquiry into the causes, and 'a prayerful consideration' of them. 'The event,' they declared, 'ought to be regarded as a source of deep abasement and sorrow before God.' In the same year, the committee of the Baptist Union announced that the condition of their churches was, where not stationary, retrograde. Of their 507 churches, 142 had 'suffered a clear diminution'—'a fact which is fitted,' they say, 'to give rise to serious and salutary reflection.' At the meeting of the Congregational Union, the denomination was announced to be 'diminishing rather than increasing.' The same appears to have been true about some of the smaller sects. The Quakers had, for some time before this, been generally relaxing the practical obligation to wear the dress, and use the peculiar speech, of their sect. Their leaders mourned the necessity, but declared that the preservation of these observances was now found to cost more than they were worth. Discontent and resentment had become common among the young who found 'their cross' too hard to bear; and they would break bounds, and desert their sect, if this much indulgence were not granted them. So, from this time it must become more and more uncommon to see young faces under the neat drab bonnet and the broad brim, and it seemed probable that in two or three more generations the Quaker garb would be seen only in old prints. The Catholics alone appear to have been decidedly

increasing in numbers during this season of discouragement to Protestant sects; and their further increase was provided for by the going over of a considerable number of the High-Church party into their communion.

The records of the time show how the contending religious parties strove to gain upon each other by bearing to the utmost upon those points of doubt and compromise which in ordinary times are approached fearfully and tenderly. The church-rate struggle went on; and we find an unusual number of refusals to marry and to bury, on account of supposed non-compliance with the conditions of the Church. In 1841, a suit was brought against a Lincolnshire clergyman by parents whose child he had refused to bury; the refusal being based on the ground that the child was really unbaptised, having been baptised only by a Wesleyan minister. The judgment, which was given against the clergyman, proceeded on the ground that lay-baptism was not denounced as a corruption at the Reformation, when an enumeration of corruptions was made; and no clergyman could take upon himself to pronounce any baptism invalid which was not declared so by the framers of the rubric. The clergyman appealed, but this judgment was affirmed; and the Tractarians did not think the better of Protestantism for such a result. The Bishop of Exeter was one of the most conspicuous movers during the period of church disturbance. We find him, in 1844, suspending one of his clergy for a term, for having omitted some words of Christian assurance in the burial-service, when interring a man supposed to have died in a state of intoxication. The supposition was a mistake; but the bishop declared that if it had not been so, the liberty taken would have been no less reprehensible. This is very well, as discountenancing the notion that any man can undertake to condemn the dead; and the moral mischief of promising future bliss alike to the good and bad remains chargeable upon the appointment of an inflexible ritual. From this time, the bishop seems to have held his power of ecclesiastical censure always in his hand, ready for use; and his clergy and their flocks were thus stimulated to a contention which soon became a scandal too gross to be endured. He took occasion by one of these quarrels to

draw up and promulgate an order of observance of doctrine and ritual, consisting of ten points, which certainly did not conduce to the restoration of peace in the Church. He laid down the law about preaching in the surplice, about postures and forms, and goings out and comings in, and refusal of burial and of the sacraments, in a fashion which irresistibly reminds the reader of the most emphatic descriptions of Pharisaic observances in the gospels; and no one out of the diocese was surprised to hear in a few weeks of actual riots in the churches and streets of Exeter. The clergy began to baptise in the midst of the service; and this seems to have been unresisted; but when they appeared in the surplice to preach, those hearers who feared the introduction of popish forms left the churches, Sunday after Sunday. The clergy persevered; the people held parish meetings, where they proposed to appeal to the body of prelates, and to the queen in council, 'for a settlement of this uncalled-for disturbance.' The clergy were hooted in the streets; and the interior of the churches presented a spectacle very unlike that of devotional tranquillity. During January 1845, the evil increased so that the bishop and the most obstinate of his clergy were compelled to yield. The church of St. Sidwell's was so noisy, that prayers could not be heard; the congregation rose in a body on the appearance of the surplice, and many went out. Two thousand people were collected outside to hoot the pastor; and it was with difficulty that a strong body of police protected him to his lodgings. It will be seen at once that the contention was not, in fact, about vestments and forms, but about something far more serious —the question, namely, whether the compromises of the composite Protestant Church should be respected, as allowing such liberty of expansion, and difference of views and observance, as are rendered necessary by change of times; or whether the forms of a past century should be adhered to with a rigidity which must compel either a rupture of the Protestant, or a return to the Catholic Church. A truce was obtained in Exeter by the bishop yielding, and instructing his clergy to yield, for the sake of peace.

Forcibly as such proceedings pressed themselves on public attention, the strongest interest of the crisis lay at Oxford,

where matters could no longer go on as they had done for some years. The bishops seemed no nearer than ever to agreement among themselves, nor to fitness to deal with the controversy of the time. One recommended peace; as if peace or truce were possible after the appeal had once been made to principle and conscience. Others strove hard to take no notice. Others left their clergy to act, each on his own conscience. No one of them can be found to have made anywhere a plain statement of the controversy, as between the Tractarian party and the other two Church sects, or as between the Church of Rome and that of England, together with a declaration on the one side or the other. The Bishop of Oxford interfered to prohibit the issue of the tracts, after the appearance of No. XC., which contained doctrine too nearly approaching to Romanism in the matter of private judgment to be allowed to pass under the eye of a Protestant bishop. From this time, the Tractarian leaders were regarded with a disapprobation, on the part of all single-minded persons, which must compel their speedy retreat from the position they held as, in Dr. Arnold's words, 'Roman Catholics at Oxford instead of at Oscott—Roman Catholics signing the articles of a Protestant Church, and holding offices in its ministry.' From this time (1841) they were sure to be keenly watched, and every opportunity seized for dislodging them from a position which they were conceived to hold treacherously. Those who wished well to the Church would have been glad to see something else done, besides this necessary but low and disagreeable work; but they were obliged to be contented with witnessing the Tractarians compelled to see and acknowledge that they were Romanists, and with discovering that, when they were gone, a 'reaction' must ensue, as injurious to the integrity, and reputation, and usefulness of the Church, as any of the changes that had occurred.

Dr. Pusey was the first of the sect chosen for punishment. Being called on to preach before the university in the spring of 1843, he discoursed on the eucharist, and was considered by some of his hearers to utter Romish doctrine about transubstantiation and the mass. The subject was brought before a Board of Convocation; and

their report was such as to compel the vice-chancellor to suspend Dr. Pusey from preaching within the precincts of the university for two years. The accused demanded a hearing, and liberty of arguing the matter; without which he declared the sentence to be 'unstatutable, as well as unjust.' His protest was, of course, disregarded. Dr. Hampden, himself a sufferer not long before, from inquisition into his opinions, did now what he could, as regius professor of divinity, to guard the Church from false doctrine. He proposed to a candidate for the degree of bachelor of divinity, subjects for exercises which must test his opinions on transubstantiation and the authority of tradition. The candidate refused to write on these subjects, and claimed the right to select his own. Dr. Hampden prevented his obtaining his degree. The candidate sued him in the vice-chancellor's court, but failed in his suit. Much regret was caused by this proceeding; for it was dangerous. It led too surely to a recognition of the incompatibility between the service of the Church and the right of private judgment. In the same year, a Mr. Ward, a clergyman, published a book, called *The Ideal of a Christian Church Considered*, some of which was declared to be inconsistent with the Thirty-nine Articles; and he was called before Convocation to answer for his work. The remarkable scene of his degradation took place on the 13th of February, when several bishops, and lay lords and commoners conspicuous in the religious world, crowded into Oxford, and intermingled with above a thousand clergymen in the hall. Mr. Ward's argument was that the articles could not be conscientiously signed by any considerable number of persons, if they were taken in 'a natural sense;' and he therefore contended for 'a non-natural sense,' as the only method of meeting an inevitable difference of views. Mr. Ward's degradation was carried by a small majority; the numbers being 569 to 511. Beside Mr. Ward stood the Rev. F. Oakeley, a fellow of the same college, and minister of the Margaret Street Chapel. He dared the Bishop of London to move in accordance with Oxford, by writing to him an avowal that he believed, though he did not teach, several of the doctrines of the Romish Church, and that he claimed liberty to hold his

own opinions, while not injuring the Church which he desired to serve. He challenged the bishop to institute proceedings against him for subscribing the articles in the same sense as Mr. Ward. The bishop instituted proceedings in the Court of Arches. Mr. Oakeley declined to defend himself in that court; and, on the other hand, the bishop declined to accept his resignation while the suit was pending. The judge decided that Mr. Oakeley had rendered himself liable to ecclesiastical censure. He was deprived of his licence, forbidden to preach till he should have retracted his errors, and condemned to pay costs.

These unseemly and painful transactions excited a spirit of jealous watchfulness elsewhere. A book published by a clergyman was the occasion of a charge of unfaithfulness to the Book of Common Prayer; and the author was reprimanded by the judge in the Arches Court, and suspended for three years. And next we find the churchwardens of Richmond complaining to the archdeacon of the officiating pastors, that, under the sanction of the bishop of the diocese, and on the plea of custom, they failed to observe some of the particulars of the Rubric. To those who had read history, and understood the laws of opinion, it was clear that the Church was far from being served by proceedings which drove men back upon the principles of private judgment; and they saw that whenever the Tractarians should have quitted Oxford for Rome, they would leave behind them no small number who, perceiving the impossibility of establishing uniformity of belief, would be as willing to hold station and maintenance in the Church, without holding its doctrines, as the men who had been driven out. The process of going over to Rome now began in earnest. Many became Catholic priests before Mr. Newman himself, who had long been a Romanist in everything but profession. When he resigned his Protestant holdings, he was followed by a crowd. Here and there a beneficed clergyman, and a host of curates, and laymen of all ranks, with their families, took the decisive step, and told their friends, or late parishioners, that they had found 'the Church'—had been received into 'the Church'—and could look with compassion on the members of a schismatical and pretended church, which merely deluded its adherents to perdition.

After this riddance, it was hoped that the Church would revive and spread. But it did not. The events of late years had greatly stimulated the clergy, and improved the character of their ministrations. But the complaint still was, and is, that the people do not enter the Church and find in it the life that it assumes to be able to give. Time will show whether this is owing to the reaction following upon the Catholic movement, or whether lapse of centuries and change of circumstances have made the Church, as now constituted, unsuitable to the needs of those to whom, distinctively, the gospel was preached in its first days. Great efforts were made by the zealous and the opulent to propagate Christianity abroad, and to establish churches in our foreign dependencies, and to build new churches and send out more clergy at home: the number of new churches built during the movement—not a few by the beneficence of individuals—is indeed remarkable; but the old edifices were left as empty as before, and no evidences have appeared of any redemption of the mass of the people from ignorance and indifference. While thus the failure of the Church to perform its work was clearly not owing to any lack of zeal and generosity in the upper classes, it seems that Lord Henley and Dr. Arnold, and other church reformers, must have been right in supposing that the old structure was no longer suited to the needs of the time, but must be extensively altered and enlarged.

Just when government was taking to heart this state of things, and was about to propose to amend it, Dr. Arnold was called away. It was in the midst of the dissensions and the weakness of the Church—dissensions and weakness which had caused him the severest pain of his life—that he was suddenly withdrawn from the scene in which he had wrought so actively. His desires for reform had caused him to be held in fear and hatred by the High-Church party; and his language in regard to the Evangelical party was never such as to conciliate their good-will. At the same time, he was too much of a Churchman, and had tampered too much with his own mind in early life with regard to subscription to the articles, to have any power of appreciating the principles and position of the Dissenters. It was therefore only with the Moderate

Church that he could be in cordial communion; and, owing to the independence of his views, and the peremptory manner in which he issued them, he was feared and disliked by many of his own Church party, as strongly as he was honoured and adored by others. It is on other grounds than his relation to the Church that his posthumous reputation rests. He was the most earnest public man of his time—of a time when earnestness was supremely needed and was sadly deficient. He presented the spectacle of a man of not only blameless, but exalted and holy life, who lived wholly and solely for what seemed to him truth and good. It was and is felt to be a pity that his views of truth and good were impaired by narrowness of view and of experience, and by a want of knowledge of men and affairs; so that his earnestness led him to devise and judge and insist on matters, and for persons and classes, which he did not understand—as when he would have made a declaration of Christian belief an indispensable requisite to the full enjoyment of political and social rights; a method which would have acted as a premium on hypocrisy, and have done violence to some of the best consciences in the community: but such defects did not neutralise the value of his earnestness and transparent sincerity, conspicuous as they were in the midst of the indifference or the formalism and insincerity of the time. And he communicated this earnestness and sincerity to a large number of those who are becoming the men of a later time. As an educator, he put his heart into his work, and laboured there as elsewhere, for truth and good. The views which he considered invaluable may not be in every case held by those whom he trained to hold ideas on conviction only; points which he insisted on as indispensable may appear otherwise to his pupils in their maturity; but they owe to him the power and the conscience to think for themselves, and the earnest habit of mind which makes their conviction a part of their life. By this exalted view and method as an educator, Dr. Arnold did more for education than even by his express and unintermitting assertion of the importance of the function—powerful as his testimony was. At the head of Rugby School, he had large opportunities both for testimony and action; and what he

did will never be forgotten. His life was a public blessing while it lasted; and it has become more so since his death; for his virtues and his toils are not now, as when he lived, obscured by the local and temporary strifes which always prevent men from doing justice to each other, and vitiate the noblest perspective of character, rendering prominent what need be scarcely seen, and hiding the grandest features behind mere magnified accidents. The horror with which he and the Tractarian leaders spoke of each other is forgotten now. Those leaders have found their Church; and he is seen to have been the man required in his place by the moral wants of the age—as conspicuously a public benefactor as worthy of the love and reverence which waited upon his private life. He died in 1842, the day before the completion of his forty-seventh year.

In the midst of the government action for bringing the Church and the people together, another clergyman died, whose view of Church matters was more secular than any held by the ecclesiastical reformers of the time. It seems strange that Sydney Smith should ever have been in the Church; and it is far from strange that earnest ecclesiastics should have been scandalised at his method of treatment of some matters which were to them as solemn and serious as the Gospel. He was, in truth, a moralist and not a religious guide; and he could as little conceive of a spiritual call to the clerical office as his enemies could give him credit for earnestness about the matters which appeared to him most serious. In his letters about the ecclesiastical commission, he speaks throughout of the 'prizes' in the Church as the inducement to men to go into it, and he never appears to conceive of any higher impulsion; but perhaps few of the most spiritual and devoted ministers of the Church have so fervently, constantly, and powerfully advocated the interests of duty, and shown the beauty of the things that are honest, pure, lovely, and of good report. It does not follow that because he was the greatest wit of his time, and of strong social inclinations, he was spoiled. He could admonish and satirise the great, as well as the lowly; and his sympathies were always on the side of the suffering and oppressed. His advocacy was always on behalf of the liberal and progressive side

of the questions of the day. He quizzed Dissenters and Churchmen all round, exhibiting fanaticism, worldliness, bigotry, and all manner of foibles, wherever he saw them, but always aiding the claimants of freedom of opinion. He quizzed all the parties concerned about Catholic emancipation; but he did more for the Catholics than perhaps any divine ever did before for a body under disqualification for religious opinion. He felt too strongly about negro slavery to quiz the parties in that case; but his wit there took the form of a branding indignation, an impassioned irony, which might pierce the brain and marrow of the oppressor. That his name was always connected with the *Edinburgh Review*, of which he was one of the founders, shows that his position in the Church was that of alliance with the government; and he openly regarded the Church as an institution for the teaching and training of the people in Christian morality, with the support, and under the sanction, of the government. His views appear to have prompted him to the duty of a good pastor in his country residence; for, while he was eagerly sought in London society, and his writings keenly read wherever they could make their way, he was welcomed on his return home by the humblest of his neighbours—the old men and women to whom, as he said, he gave good things for their rheumatism, without any mixture of the Thirty-nine Articles. If it be granted that he was a moralist, and by no means a divine, it may be considered a matter of congratulation that the Church had, in a season of great peculiarity, a minister who waged effectual war against cant and fanaticism, and who, closely connected with ruling statesmen, lifted up his voice, without fear or favour, for justice and reasonableness on every hand. He rebuked Whig statesmen, when he thought them tampering with the property of the clergy, as soundly as any Wesleyan fanatic or Tractarian formalist; and one such plain-speaking logician and wit might be welcomed to a place in the ranks of the clergy—especially under the certainty that such another would never appear in one age. He held a living of moderate value in Somersetshire, and was made a canon residentiary of St. Paul's in 1831, when he was already growing old. He died in the seventy-seventh year of his age, in February 1845, while contem-

plating, with some amusement, and something of the contempt with which old age views new enterprises, the attempts of government and zealous members of the Church to bring the Establishment more effectually within reach of the popular need.

On the 5th of May 1843, Sir R. Peel offered a project to parliament of which he said as follows: 'The advantage I anticipate is, that by this proceeding I shall place the Church of England in a favourable light before the people of this country, and conciliate towards it that favour and affection to which I believe it to be justly entitled, and lay the foundation of extended usefulness. Those foundations must be widened. It is in vain that you have splendid cathedrals, and bishops highly endowed—in vain you have dignitaries and splendid edifices—if you fail to impress on the people the conviction that great practical advantages are to be derived from them. Unless in populous districts you bring the ministrations of the Church within the reach of the people, it is in vain that you support its dignitaries; for the polished columns of the temple will not be secure, unless you widen the basis on which they rest. Here is the point in which the Church of England is wanting at present; her parochial constitution was made in other times, and suited to other states of the people; you must divide parishes, and bring ministers into them, and you will thus add at once to the respectability, to the influence, and to the property of the Church, by applying her present property to strengthen her position, and increase her influence.' All that could be done by preparation and arrangement was to be attempted now. The body was to be made ready, if the spirit would but come. Thus much it was right to do, that, if the Church should finally fail to redeem the masses of the people, the failure might be through no neglect of their rulers. And the proposal of the minister was so well received as to obviate all difficulty and all waste of time. 'My examination into the management of Church property,' he said on this occasion, 'leads me to think that there may be very material improvements in its administration.' The proposal was to bring into combined operation the boards of Ecclesiastical Commissioners and of Queen Anne's Bounty, by a method which

would largely increase the means of augmenting small livings, and afford funds for providing a considerable addition to the numbers of the clergy. The minister did not propose to spend any of the money on new churches, as the last few years had shown how much could be done by the zeal of individuals and private society. To follow up the recent church-building by making permanent endowments for ministers was the object. The House agreed unanimously to the project.

It was not only at home that church extension was to be promoted. In 1841, the prelates of England and Ireland agreed on an appeal to the religious public for the raising of a fund for founding colonial bishoprics; and in the next year, the Bishop of London directed his clergy, in a pastoral letter, to have collections made in their churches for the purpose, recommending the ancient method, now revived by the Tractarian clergy, of making these offerings a part of the service. In August of the same year (1842), five colonial bishops were consecrated in Westminster Abbey —their sees being that of Barbadoes (not new), and the four new ones of Antigua, Guiana, Gibraltar, and Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land). The Bishop of New Zealand had already sailed for his distant diocese. A bishopric had been established at Jerusalem, in 1841, under the joint auspices of Prussia and England—a scheme of much less promise than the formation of colonial sees. British subjects residing in British territory have a clear right of access to the services of the national Church; but it is quite a different thing to plant a missionary church in a country where the Christian religion is despised by inhabitants of two races who have each a faith of their own which they value as highly as the stranger can value his. By the very nature of the Mohammedan and Jewish faiths, their sincere and enlightened votaries cannot undergo conversion; and the scheme has, thus far, had no success which can justify its continuance. The institution of the Jerusalem mission stands as a curious instance of zeal for church extension abroad, at a time when the Church was practically in a state of painful and depressing feebleness at home.

The plan of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to constitute bishoprics at Ripon and Manchester by consolidating the

sees of Bristol and Gloucester, and of St. Asaph and Bangor, met with a revived opposition in 1843. Every one agreed that the establishment of the see of Ripon was a public benefit; and every one desired to see a Bishop of Manchester. But there were three objections, moved by different parties, to the carrying out of the plan. The Earl of Powis, who brought forward the subject in the House of Lords, insisted that the Welsh bishoprics were wanted, with all their revenues, for the Welsh. The High-Church party continued their protests against the government and its commission touching any of the ancient bishoprics at all; but the greatest difficulty—that which was admitted in the debates to be at the bottom of the opposition—was the proposal that any English bishop should be inadmissible to the House of Lords. The Duke of Wellington manfully avowed that any increase in the number of bishops in the House would excite great jealousy throughout the country; and the Archbishop of Canterbury advocated the plan of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners; but the Bishop of London adverted to the fact that all bishops sit in parliament in virtue of their baronies, and dreaded lest the omission of any of them should in time generate a desire to dispense with the parliamentary duty of the bishops altogether. The Bishop of Exeter wished for more bishops, both in the country and in the House, but suggested that a parliamentary attendance by rotation, as in the case of the Irish prelates, might be arranged. Among the other bishops there was a remarkable variety of opinions; and the result of the discussion was that Lord Powis withdrew his bill, with a promise to bring it forward again next session.

Before the next session, the Welsh disturbances had occurred; and this gave an advantage to the parties for whom the Earl of Powis was spokesman. There had before been many petitions against the union of the sees; and now there were more still—from the clergy throughout the country, and from all classes in Wales—no doubt under the influence of their clergy. In parliament, the ground of debate still was the increase or diminution of the number of bishops in the House, the Bishop of Bangor actually venturing to remind the nation that there was a

time when forty bishops sat with a small number of lay peers, thirty or forty mitred abbots having seats in the House. That, however, was before Manchester, and the two millions who now needed a bishop there existed; and the Archbishop of Canterbury still thought that those two millions ought to be considered before the 350,000 Welsh who were now divided between two sees; and the four archdeacons to be given to Wales would amply suffice, with one bishop. The second reading of Lord Powis's bill for repealing the arrangement of the commission was carried; but its progress was then stopped by a very unusual proceeding. On the 1st of July, the Duke of Wellington declared that the bill touched the prerogative of the crown, and that he was not authorised to give the consent of the sovereign to its further discussion. A committee, appointed to search for precedents, reported that the fact was indeed as the Duke of Wellington had stated; and Lord Powis therefore withdrew his bill, declaring that the matter could not rest here. This was indeed evident enough; for the question was assuming the aspect of a contest between the government and the Church—such a contest as was becoming more significant and more dangerous with every new dispute. Before the debate was closed on the present occasion, it was carefully made known by the law lords that the sovereign had no power to stop discussion in either House of parliament; and that the intimation just made was to be understood as a timely hint that the royal assent would not be given to any measure which might result from the debate. In the next session, the bill of Lord Powis was thrown out by a large majority on the first division. In the session of 1846, the opposition of the crown was withdrawn, and the bill passed the Lords; but it was dropped in the Lower House, on a promise from the new minister, Lord John Russell, that the government would consider the subject before another session. In due time, the new see of Manchester was provided with a bishop; and then the sees of Bangor and St. Asaph were allowed to remain apart. But the contest between the government and the Church was renewed on a more perilous ground—that of the appointment of a bishop to the see of Hereford. One

of the compromises involved in the union of the Church and State was in question in this case; and the minister, Lord J. Russell, apparently unaware of the peril of the part he took, cast aside the delicacy usually observed by statesmen in approaching that particular compromise, and pushed the claim of the royal prerogative, to an extent most galling and offensive to the Church, in insisting on the election of Dr. Hampden to the see of Hereford. This is the latest instance of Church and State conflict; but every one knows that it cannot be the last. While waiting for the next occasion, our statesmen have the warning of the Church of Scotland before them; a warning against bearing hard on old compromises unless they are prepared for a new revolution; a warning of what men will do and sacrifice for principle when their religious powers and privileges are believed by them to be in danger; a warning against the notion that the bulk of any nation can regard the church of its faith as an instrument of mere religious police under the direction of the government. A church must be more than this, or it must presently be nothing; and, because it must be more than this, if anything, it is clear that its alliance with the State can subsist only as long as a spirit of benevolent moderation is devoutly cherished on both sides.

A singular incident which occurred during this critical period is an illustration of such a spirit exercised by a High-Churchman of eminence. Dr. Hook, vicar of Leeds, honourably distinguished by a vast sacrifice of patronage to the interests of the Church, was brought into close connection with the Chartists of the town, by the determination of that body to elect churchwardens from their own body. They did so in 1842; and when the election of 1843 was to take place, Dr. Hook declared on the spot that he must say that they were the only body of churchwardens who had conducted themselves in an honourable, straightforward, and gentlemanly manner. They told him fairly that they differed from him on many points; but declared that, if they undertook the office, they would conscientiously strive to discharge its duties. They had done so; and he could not therefore wish for better churchwardens, unless the persons assembled would let

him have some from among the members of the Established Church. Would they do so? The meeting answered in the negative; and when the vicar read over a list of names, those of the Chartists were carried with acclamation, and their election was received with a good grace. It must have been a singular scene.

During this period occasion arose for testing the principles of the administration in regard to religious liberty—an occasion which involved a question of great nicety, and therefore a test of unusual decisiveness. The excitement throughout the kingdom was very strong; and indeed the controversy about Dissenters' endowments was the prominent one, in connection with parliament, of 1844. It was scarcely possible that the ministers could have foreseen how their proposition would become the basis of a religious movement; but when it did, and when the movement assumed all the violence which belongs to religious movements in critical times, they held their ground calmly and firmly, as protectors of justice, showing throughout a sensibility to religious liberty which won for them such esteem from the enlightened portion of the people as abundantly compensated for the loss of support from the bigoted and the half-informed who made up the opposition. It was, in fact, a case in which there could not be two opinions among honest men fully informed of the facts. But a multitude of honest zealots were not fully informed of the facts; and they carried on a most formidable resistance under a wrong impression. The story was this.

In the reign of Charles II., a certain Lady Hewley left certain manors in York in trust to support 'godly preachers of Christ's holy gospel.' The lady herself had, of course, no idea that a doubt would ever arise as to what sort of 'preachers' her bequest was intended to benefit. They must be Dissenters; for the clergy of the Romish and English Churches were never called 'preachers' in her time; and she was well known to be herself a Dissenter, and devoted to Dissenting interests. Unitarians were not heard of in her day; and, if heard of, they would have been called, by Lady Hewley among other Trinitarians, blasphemers, or anything rather than 'godly preachers of

Christ's holy gospel.' But the religious body to which Lady Hewley belonged was that which has since become, by gradual change, the Unitarian body of the present day. Naturally and necessarily, they have baptised their infants and buried their dead in the chapels endowed by Lady Hewley's fund; and that fund naturally and inevitably contributed to the support of the young ministers who went forth from the congregations worshipping in those chapels. Of late years, however, Dissenters sprung from a sect to which Lady Hewley did not belong, but who conceived themselves to hold the opinions professed by her when she made her will, thought that their ministers and congregations ought to be the recipients of her bequest, and that the Unitarians had forfeited their right to hold it when they relinquished the doctrine which she considered that of 'Christ's holy gospel.' A report of the Charity Commissioners sanctioned the inquiry; and a bill was filed in Chancery to dispossess the Unitarians. The judges of the court decided against the Unitarians, who appealed to the Lords. The Lords required the opinion of the twelve judges. With the exception of one of their number, Maule, the judges were unanimous in their opinion—delivered in June 1842—that the Unitarians were excluded from the bequest, and that the property ought to belong to the Trinitarian Protestant Dissenters. The Lords, of course, affirmed the judgment of the Court of Chancery. After a litigation of fourteen years, this decision was pronounced in August 1842. After all, it settled nothing but the exclusion of the Unitarians, and left the property unappropriated.

The difficulties of this case were produced by lapse of time and consequent changes of opinion, and not by fault on any hand; but they were difficulties of so serious a kind that the government saw the necessity of preventing their perpetual recurrence by an act which should forbid the unsettlement of ancient property, and disorganising quarrels about such property, on every material change of opinion in religious sects. It was a bad thing that an interest in property should be directly implicated with particular opinions. It was a bad thing that any sect should be under temptation to covet the property of

another. It was a bad thing that an honest change of opinion should involve the penalty of surrendering the graves of ancestors, the old places of family worship, and all the religious haunts which are at least as dear to Nonconformists, whose fathers have suffered for their faith, as the most solemn cathedral and the most venerable ivied church in the country can be to those who worship there. It is bad that, as in the Hewley case, years of litigation should consume funds and irritate tempers, and leave a painful doubt at last whether justice can ever be done; whether, if the holders cannot be said to have a right to the property, it can ever be certainly decided, by any judges on earth, that it ought to be given to anybody else. To obviate such mischiefs as these, the government brought a bill before parliament which should confirm to all religious bodies the possession of the property which they had held for the preceding twenty years. The lord chancellor brought in this bill; and though it was opposed by a few bishops and lay lords, it passed the Upper House by a considerable majority. During the debate, however, an agitation had been begun which soon extended to almost every town in England, convoked public meetings where violent resolutions were carried, and loaded the table of the House of Commons with as many petitions as had gone up against Sir James Graham's educational clauses. The reason of the violence was, that the bill was supposed to be devised for the benefit of the Unitarians. The supposition was a mistake; but it was natural enough in persons who were not well informed in regard to some preceding legislation.

It was not only that Lady Hewley's case had furnished the warning and suggestion on which the ministerial bill proceeded. The first clause had a special bearing on Unitarian property. In 1813, the exceptions in the Act of Toleration—exceptions which affected the Unitarians exclusively—were repealed; and from that time, the Unitarians were as firmly assured in the possession of religious trust-property as any other sect. But, by an omission, the act had not been made retrospective; and therefore, though the property of Unitarians instituted since 1813 was safe, they were at the mercy of litigation

for all that had been in their hands from an earlier date. The first clause of the present bill went merely to repair this omission; but the Dissenting sects which contemplated claiming Unitarian property, as in the Hewley case, made an outcry that government was intercepting property which should soon become theirs, and settling it in preference upon the Unitarians. The matter was clearly explained by the attorney-general, when he introduced the bill in the Commons on the 6th of June. He showed how, in the case of the Roman Catholics, similar assurance had been made retrospective, as a matter of course; and declared that the present bill was prepared on the recommendation of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and had been supported by all the legal authorities in the House of Lords. The prime-minister's speech was as frank and manly on behalf of justice as the action of his government on the occasion. He had not based his proceeding, he said, on the legal doctrines or historical truths brought forward so abundantly in the debate. His feeling was that, if any legal doctrine existed by which chapels held by any class of Dissenters could be taken from them, and given away elsewhere, the first thing to be done was to amend such a legal rule.

While the clamour was loud throughout the 'religious world,' as the petitioners called themselves, outside the walls of parliament, there was a remarkable preponderance of argument, ability, and political character within the House in favour of the government bill; a preponderance so remarkable as to be observed upon as unexampled by both Sir R. Peel and Lord J. Russell. The votes went with the argument, the majority for the third reading being 120 in a House of 282. Some slight amendments having been made in committee, the bill was returned to the Lords, when the Bishop of London made another effort to renew the dispute, on the ground that the House of Commons did not represent the religious opinion of the nation. He did not perceive the danger of his own blindness to the fact, that this was not a question of religious opinion, but of security of property—which no one could deny to be the proper business of the House of Commons. Though his endeavour to throw out the bill was zealously

supported by a few peers who shared the misconceptions prevalent out of doors, it was negatived by a majority of 161 in a House of 243; and the bill presently became law. From this time, places of worship which were not by the terms of the trust destined unmistakably for a particular sect, were to remain the property of the body which had held them for twenty preceding years; a settlement as conducive to social peace as consonant to justice. What the consequences would have been if the bill had been surrendered to popular clamour, and a mass of Dissenting property had been, in effect, thrown to the religious multitude to be scrambled for, in virtue of omissions and shortcomings of the law, some of the speakers ventured to hint, but none professed to describe.

Another act of the period, promotive of justice and of social peace, was the relief of Jews from municipal disabilities. This relief was the direct act of the government. The lord chancellor brought in a bill, early in the session of 1845, for removing certain tests by which Jews were excluded from some municipal offices, while others remained open to them. Five Jewish gentlemen were at that time magistrates—some for several counties; some were deputy-lieutenants, and all might be high-sheriff. If they refused to serve the office of sheriff in London, they were subject to a fine; yet they were excluded from the office of alderman—which is considered the compensation or reward for having discharged the onerous duties of the shrievalty—by a clause in the declaration which could be subscribed to only by a Christian; this clause itself dating only from 1828. In some towns the disability was evaded by management and subterfuge; but this did not mend the case. It is scarcely credible how much could be found to be said against a relief so reasonable and necessary as the one proposed; but the measure was carried with ease, being, as a fanatical member of the Commons House observed, in a state of panic, 'completely of a piece with several other measures which had passed the House during the last two sessions.' The last two sessions had indeed proved that the existing administration was inferior to none that had preceded it in its enlightened regard for religious liberty.

CHAPTER X.

Canada Corn Question—Confusion of Parties—Passage of the Bill—Corn-law Debates—Richard Cobden—The League—London Election—Anecdotes—League Registration—Freehold Land Scheme—The Game Laws.

THE prospect was opening year by year to the British nation of a sufficient supply of food; or, at least, of a supply not artificially restricted. The harvest of 1842 was abundant. The newspapers, during September of that year, tell of 'immense quantities' of corn gathered in, and of a proportionate production on the continent; and in October, there was a special thanksgiving in all places of worship throughout the kingdom. But there was an event of even happier promise than the abundant harvest. A letter from Lord Stanley to the governor-general of Canada, dated in March of this year, shows that the earnest petitions of the Canadians for the free admission of their corn into Great Britain were favourably regarded by the government. The colonial secretary granted assent to all the pleas in favour of free-trade between Canada and the mother-country; but pointed out that unless Canada chose to impose a duty on the importation of wheat and flour from the United States, Great Britain would in fact be supplied from the United States, *viâ* Canada, and the British corn-laws would become a mere sham. The Channel Islands had been all along permitted to send their agricultural produce free to England, with permission to buy for themselves wherever they could buy cheapest; but they owed this privilege to their small area of production, and the landed interest would not permit the extension of the liberty to so important a colony as Canada. Such were the explanations with which Lord Stanley accompanied his news that government was about to lower the duty on Canadian wheat, and to permit the importation of Canadian flour into Ireland.

The broad hint given in this letter was immediately taken. The Canadians saw that the government at home did not choose to impose new duties on United States produce imported into Canada; but that, if the colony herself chose to do so, she might consider the British government pledged to admit her wheat and flour free, or under a merely nominal duty; and a law was passed by the Canadian legislature, without delay, by which American wheat was charged, from the 5th of July 1843, with a duty of 3*s.* per quarter.

So far, all was easy. But the affair was no sooner known in England than 'the landed interest' became extremely restless and anxious. At market-tables, at agricultural meetings, and wherever landlords and farmers met, it was hinted or proclaimed that ministers were about to let in foreign corn by a back-door, and to sink the corn-laws into an empty name. County members were instructed to be on the watch, and to put no blind trust in the ministry, till it was seen how this matter would end. The dissatisfaction was so strong as to make the ministers regret, as the colonial secretary avowed, that they had no choice of time about introducing their plan to parliament. As their promise to Canada bound them to propose their resolutions as early as possible, Lord Stanley could only deprecate the agitation, and explain away as much as he could of the alarm. No wheat from the United States was to be admitted—only flour made from it; which was as truly a Canadian manufacture as ostrich feathers were a French manufacture. The Canadians might live on United States wheat, and send us all theirs; but so they might, at any time for fifteen years—the only difference being that the duty was imposed now on the American frontier, instead of on our own shores. If we retained a duty of 1*s.* on Canadian wheat, and the Canadians paid a 3*s.* duty on United States wheat, English wheat was still protected by a 4*s.* duty, which government believed would be an effectual protection. The change was proposed purely for the benefit of the Canadians, now settling down into a state of peaceful industry; and by no means for any advantage to the British consumer, as against the agriculturist at home. Though this was said very earnestly

and ably, and though Lord Stanley had a high character as a Protectionist, the British consumer did believe that he should be the better for the change, and the British farmer did fear that he should be driven into a competition with the Americans. The news, with its attendant surmises, crept through the land, kindling hopeful smiles beside many a loom, and within the walls of many a cottage in town and country; and calling up dread in the mind of many a farmer who pondered how he could pay his rent if he was to be under-sold in a shabby way, by an act of the same government which had already altered the sliding-scale in a spirit of favouritism to the consumer.

When Lord Stanley proposed his resolutions, he was opposed by some members of the Liberal party on the ground that he was establishing a new protection in Canada, and supported by others on the ground that the Canadians should be allowed to obtain all the corn they could get. There is no doubt that many votes were secured to the government by the prevalent conviction of the danger of hurting and irritating the Canadians by annulling one of the first acts of their united legislature; and, if Lord Stanley's resolutions had been rejected, the necessary consequence would have been the refusal of the royal assent to the Canadian Bill. The resolutions were affirmed by a large majority. The debates in committee were chiefly remarkable for a confusion of parties such as indicated to impartial persons that a crisis was approaching. As usually happens when such confusion of parties takes place, there was violent recrimination. The Anti-Corn-Law Leaguers looked on with deep interest, and perceived that their cause was making rapid advances. In the Upper House there were also opposite allegations against the measure. It introduced the practice of protection into the colonies, and must therefore be opposed; and again, it must be opposed because it nullified the Protectionist arrangements of the preceding year. Lord Stanhope declared that these measures were only stepping-stones to the general adoption of free-trade principles, which ministers had consistently avowed; and others supported or denounced the measure as a recession from

free-trade principles. Amidst these contradictions, the colonial secretary's bill passed the stage of debate in the Lords by a majority of 32 in a House of 82, and became law without delay.

By this time, there were large numbers of persons in a state of hope or fear from the conviction that the existing government 'had never attempted to conceal,' as Lord Stanhope said, 'their advance towards the full adoption of free-trade principles.' Throughout the country, the preparations for the crisis were proceeding. Every parliamentary seat that became vacant was contested by the corn-law repealers; and every word that fell from ministers and their adherents in either House was watched and pondered. This state of expectation gave an interest to the corn-law debates which would otherwise have been utterly wearisome, from the lack of novelty, and the preponderance of argument on one side. In March, Mr. Ward moved, unsuccessfully, for a committee to inquire whether there were any peculiar burdens on land, and if so, what they were; and in May, Mr. Villiers brought forward his annual motion for a committee of the whole House, to consider the operation of the corn-importation duties, with a view to their immediate abolition. The government declined further change while their last sliding-scale was new and untried; the Whig leaders and their adherents desired a fixed duty; and the Protectionists were awake and active in opposition to the motion—yet the majority by which it was rejected was much less than in the preceding year; the numbers being in 1842, 393 to 90; and now, 381 to 125. In 1844, the majority on the same occasion again sank to 204; and the Protectionists began to calculate how long their corn-law could be preserved if their majority continued to sink at the rate of 50 in a year. The ministers, this time as before, said that their new scale was not yet proved a failure, and that, till it was, they would countenance no change. Sir R. Peel said that as he had before declared, so he would declare still, that the government had not contemplated, and did not now contemplate, any change in that corn-law which was settled two years since; but now, as before, he guarded himself against being understood to mean that he would at all times, and under

all circumstances, resist change; because that was a thing which no man ought to say on any matter of the kind. Lord J. Russell declined voting, on the ground that he was equally unwilling to have things go on as they were, and to throw open the trade in corn. Adhering to his own proposal of a fixed duty of 8*s.*, he would not vote for any alternative. He was deserted now, however, by Lord Howick, who avowed himself an advocate of immediate repeal, as compromise was no longer possible. He saw that industry was inadequately rewarded; that both wages and profits were low; and that these results were mainly owing to restrictions on the importation of food. This was a remarkable fact; and there were other remarkable facts connected with this debate; but none of them, separately or collectively, were so notable as the line of defence taken by the Protectionists. Their speeches were almost wholly occupied by complaints or denunciations of the Anti-Corn-Law League.

The change within three years was indeed great. On the 25th of August 1841, after the general election, and a few days before the resignation of the Whig cabinet, in the course of the debate on the address in answer to the queen's speech, the people's tale was for the first time fully and properly told in parliament. Mr. Cobden had been sent up to the House as representative of the bread-winners of the kingdom; and, on the first occasion of his rising, he told the story in a way which fixed the attention of every thoughtful observer of the times. When the daily papers of the 26th of August had reached their destinations throughout the island, there were meditative students, anxious invalids in their sick-chambers, watchful philosophers, and a host of sufferers from want, who felt that a new era in the history of England had opened, now that the people's tale had at last been told in the people's House of parliament. Such observers as these, and multitudes more, asked of all who could tell them who this Richard Cobden was, and what he was like: and the answer was that he was a member of a calico-printing firm in Manchester; that it was supposed that he would be an opulent man if he prosecuted business as men of business usually do; but that he gallantly sacrificed the pursuit of his own

fortune, and his partners gallantly spared him to the public, for the sake of the great cause of corn-law repeal —his experience, his liberal education, and his remarkable powers, all indicating him as a fitting leader in the enterprise. It was added that his countenance was grave, his manner simple and earnest, his eloquence plain, ready, and forcible, of a kind eminently suited to his time and his function, and wholly new in the House of Commons. It was at once remarked that he was not treated in the House with the courtesy usually accorded to a new member; and it was perceived that he did not need such observance. However agreeable it might have been to him, he did not expect it from an assemblage proud of 'the preponderance of the landed interest' within it; and he could do without it. Some who had least knowledge of the operative classes, and the least sympathy for them, were touched by the simplicity and manliness with which the new member received the jeers which followed his detailed statements of the proportion of the bread-duty paid by men who must support their families on 10*s.* a week. 'He did not know,' he said, 'whether it was the monstrous injustice of the case, or the humble individual who stated it, that excited this manifestation of feeling; but still, he did state that the nobleman's family paid to this bread-tax but one half-penny in every £100 as income-tax, while the effect of the tax upon the labouring man's family was 20 per cent. . . . He had lately had an opportunity of seeing a report of the state of our labouring population in all parts of the country. Probably honourable gentlemen were aware that a very important meeting had been lately held at Manchester; he alluded to the meeting of ministers of religion. [A laugh.] He understood that laugh; but he should not pause in his statement of facts, but might perhaps notice it before concluding. He had seen a body of ministers of religion of all denominations—650 (and not thirty) in number—assembled from all parts of the country, at an expense of from three to four thousand pounds, paid by their congregations. At that meeting most important statements of facts were made relating to the condition of the labouring-classes. He would not trouble the House by reading those statements; but they showed that in

every district of the country . . . . the condition of the great body of her majesty's labouring population had deteriorated woefully within the last ten years, and more especially within the last three years; and that, in proportion as the price of food increased, in the same proportion the comforts of the working-classes had diminished. One word with respect to the manner in which his allusion to this meeting was received. He did not come there to vindicate the conduct of these Christian men in having assembled in order to take this subject into consideration. The parties who had to judge them were their own congregations. There were at that meeting members of the Established Church, of the Church of Rome, Independents, Baptists, members of the Church of Scotland, and of the Secession Church, Methodists, and indeed ministers of every other denomination; and if he were disposed to impugn the character of those divines, he felt he should be casting a stigma and a reproach upon the great body of professing Christians in this country. He happened to be the only member of the House present at that meeting; and he might be allowed to state that when he heard the tales of misery there described; when he heard these ministers declare that members of their congregations were kept away from places of worship during the morning-service, and only crept out under cover of the darkness of night; when they described others as unfit to receive spiritual consolation, because they were sunk so low in physical destitution—that the attendance at Sunday-schools was falling off; when he heard these and such-like statements; when he who believed that the corn-laws, the provision monopoly, was at the bottom of all that was endured, heard those statements, and from such authority, he must say that he rejoiced to see gentlemen of such character come forward, and like Nathan, when he addressed the owner of flocks and herds who had plundered the poor man of his only lamb, say unto the doer of injustice, whoever he might be: "Thou art the man." The people, through their ministers, had protested against the corn-laws. Those laws had been tested by the immutable morality of Scripture. Those reverend gentlemen had prepared and signed a petition, in which they prayed the

removal of those laws—laws which, they stated, violated the Scriptures, and prevented famishing children from having a portion of those fatherly bounties which were intended for all people; and he would remind honourable gentlemen that, besides these 650 ministers, there were 1500 others from whom letters had been received, offering up their prayers, in their several localities, to incline the will of Him who ruled princes and potentates to turn your hearts to justice and mercy. When they found so many ministers of religion, without any sectarian differences, joining heart and hand in a great cause, there could be no doubt of their earnestness. . . . . Englishmen had a respect for rank, for wealth, perhaps too much; they felt an attachment to the laws of their country; but there was another attribute in the minds of Englishmen—there was a permanent veneration for sacred things; and where their sympathy and respect and deference were enlisted in what they believed to be a sacred cause, "you and yours," declared the speaker, addressing the Protectionists, "will vanish like chaff before the whirlwind."' Much of this speech relating to the great meeting of religious ministers at Manchester, and its tone being determined accordingly, some of the laughing members of the House called Mr. Cobden a Methodist parson, and were astonished afterwards to find what his abilities were in widely different directions. Some regarded him as a pledged Radical in politics, and were surprised to see him afterwards verifying the assurances he gave this night—that he belonged to no party, and, as a simple free-trader, would support either the Whigs or Sir R. Peel, whichever of them should go furthest in repealing the restrictions on food. Almost everybody regarded him as a representative of the Manchester manufacturers, as an embodiment of cotton-spinning, and therefore as the sworn foe of the landed interest: but it appeared in due course that he was the son of a Sussex farmer; that he understood and had at heart the interests of agriculture; and that he could enlighten and guide and aid the farming class and their labourers far better than those who assumed to be their special friends and protectors. In proportion as Mr. Cobden's influence rose and spread in the League and in the country, the agitation

against the corn-laws included more and more of the landed interest, and was less and less distinctive of the manufacturing districts and population. Meantime, from this 25th of August 1841, there were members of the landed aristocracy who watched Mr. Cobden's course with an interest beyond that of curiosity, declaring that this, his first address to the House—an address which he supposed to be the simplest possible statement of a very simple matter—was 'a *great* speech.'

By the spring of 1843, how changed was the tone of the House! There was no laughing now at or about the Lancashire Leaguers; but instead, a rueful complaint from Mr. Bankes, as spokesman for 'the landed interest,' of their activity and power in the country. 'As to matters affecting those who, like himself,' said Mr. Bankes, 'desired to live quietly and safely among their tenantry in the country, the ministry had not the power of knowing, as he and other gentlemen in the country had, the enormous extent of mischief which might be produced—which was attempted to be produced—at this present time, by the emissaries of this League. . . . . He had no reason to seek for any ministerial support in the county which he represented; but he looked to ministers for the peace of his private life—for the comfort, happiness, and welfare of the peasantry who lived around him. He looked to them to drive away, by some means or other, this new mode of sending emissaries throughout the country—paid emissaries; for such were avowed and boasted of by the honourable member for Stockport [Mr. Cobden]. It was of this he complained, and it was from this he entreated the government to protect the country; as one of their fellow-citizens, as a faithful and dutiful subject of the crown, he asked, he besought, he demanded this at the hands of her majesty's ministers.'

It need not be said that Mr. Bankes's demand was in vain. Ours is not a country, nor an age, in which government can stop inquiries into the rate of wages and the condition of the labourer, or interfere with the publication of the results. As is always the case when monopolies are about to be destroyed, the advocates of monopoly in this instance mistook the movement for an attack upon

their fortunes, and an interference with their private affairs. The League leaders were always anxious to learn —ready to receive suggestions and instructions from their foes; and from this it was that their agents were abroad at this time, in the agricultural counties. At first, the movement was regarded as one of the manufacturers exclusively; and at first perhaps it was so. It was originated in Lancashire—its head-quarters were at Manchester—and its funds were mainly supplied by 'the cotton lords' of the district. They were taunted with a sordid regard to their own interest, and charged with a desire to sacrifice the peasantry of the country to their own ends. Their daily-improving knowledge of the operation of the corn-laws was rapidly teaching them much more than they had ever dreamed of, of the fatal influence of those laws on the condition of the agricultural labourer; and they now resolved to ascertain the facts of the state of the peasantry in the southern counties, and to publish them, week by week, in their newspaper. Though they, and all other political economists, knew, as the very alphabet of their science, that the employers of labour do not fix the wages of labour, they were aware that their opponents did not yet understand this; and they therefore lost no opportunity of saying everywhere, from the House of Commons down to the humblest open-air gathering, that it was the corn-laws and other irresistible influences, and not the landowners, that made wages so low. Yet, every gentleman on the Protectionist side, whose labourers were starving on 7*s.* or 8*s.* per week, resented the publication of the fact, as an imputation on his humanity. It was not this that was the ground of imputation; but the carelessness, or prejudice, or neglect of duty, which made these gentry extol the condition of their wretched dependents, and resent all inquiry into it, and all efforts to improve it. There is material in that singular newspaper, the *League*, which can be found nowhere else, for a history of the condition of the people prior to the release of agriculture from so-called protection. Agents of good business-habits, knowledge, and power of observation, were sent on journeys through counties, where they paused at every step, noted the condition of

every field, fence, farm-yard, and cottage, for miles together; and the evidence thus afforded of bad tillage, and every kind of waste, of overweening rents, uncertain profits, and wages reduced below the point of possible maintenance, is such as a future generation could not believe, if offered in a less unquestionable form. On one nobleman's estate, the poor labourers were punished by being turned to road-labour for having answered the questions of a League agent, and admitted him into their hovels, where he noted the holes in the thatch, and the puddles in the floor, and witnessed the destitution of food. The League, from that moment, changed its method of procuring the same kind of information—publishing the fact that in no case detailed by them was the information obtained from the sufferers themselves; and on they went with their disclosures. The further they proceeded, the more they confirmed the statements of the 2000 ministers of religion who prayed in their churches and chapels for equal laws and daily bread for all.

But the League leaders not only sent agents through the agricultural districts; they went there themselves. As soon as the House rose, Mr. Cobden was down upon the southern and midland counties, holding meetings on market-days, and arguing the question against all comers with singular success. We find, in glancing over the newspapers of the time, that his opponents were usually elaborately prepared—their loudest speakers put forward—their resolutions or amendments well pondered—their posse of supporters well placed on the ground; but too often, we find them, when baffled, and perceiving the audience going against them, losing temper, seizing the wagons, or drowning the voices of the speakers by clamour. Rapidly, there was an accession of farmers to the League; and some of them became League speakers. More rapidly than ever before, intelligence began to spread among the dull and depressed labouring-class. They found light cast upon their condition; they heard reasonings which they understood; they found that what they had suspected was really true—that their interests were not identical with those of the receivers of rent, though it was true that they ought to be. They under-

stood that they and their employers, the farmers, were the 'agricultural interest' which the League desired to restore to prosperity, and not the landowners; the landowners being, as Mr. Cobden told them, no more agriculturists than shipowners were sailors. By means of exercising the minds of the labouring-classes on affairs interesting to them, and within their comprehension, the League leaders did more for popular education than has, as yet, been achieved by any other means. A circumstance less worthy of note is that, as the weeks and months passed on, we see more and more of county magistrates, of landowners, of noblemen, and members of parliament, attending on the hustings, and joining their efforts with those of the League leaders. And next, we arrive at notices of meetings of agricultural associations, and other bodies, where members of the government are found speaking. Their theme is always the backward state of agriculture, and the necessity of advancing it, in order to enable the country to produce its own food, and be independent of the foreigner. The hearers regularly appear anxious to be told about tenures —to know what their rulers thought about leases—about the security the tenant might hope for, if he should be willing to lay out capital in the improvement of his land; and as regularly they appear to have been disappointed. Amidst a great deal that is very interesting about draining and fencing, and an improved farming economy in every way, nothing seems to have been ever said about rents and leases. Yet, it was unwise to leave these topics to be dealt with exclusively by the League. It was natural that men should watch the movements of the prime-minister in relation to such matters at such a time; and a speech of his at the Tamworth town-hall, at the meeting of a farmers' club, in October 1843, was read and commented on all over the country. It spoke of leases. After urging on the farmers to improve their knowledge and skill, and offering to procure them means of information, Sir R. Peel avowed his willingness to grant leases to any tenant of his own who should desire one, and could show that he was able and willing to improve the land. The speech conveyed everywhere a strong impression that it was spoken with the earnestness belonging to a critical

season; that the speaker believed the improvement of agriculture to be the only ground of hope of better times for the landed interests. But there was a paragraph at the end which fixed attention more than all the rest. The vicinity of Birmingham was pointed out as a capital advantage to the Leicestershire farmers, as affording a market for their produce; and nothing could be more clear than the assertion of the prime-minister, that the interests of agriculture and manufactures are inseparably united, and that whatever supports the vigour of manufactures must open markets, and keep up the demand for agricultural produce. This doctrine is simple and clear enough; but it was then League doctrine, and absolutely opposite to that taken for granted by the Protectionists; and it excited a proportionate sensation when given forth by the head of the administration.

A month after this, the League met in Manchester, to offer evidence of much increased boldness and power. Last year, they had easily raised £50,000, to be employed in the diffusion of knowledge in relation to the corn-laws: they now resolved to raise £100,000; and six persons stepped forward instantly to offer £500 each, and forty-two gave, on the spot, sums between that amount and £100. Before the meeting closed, nearly £13,000 were subscribed. The money was needed for other purposes than the diffusion of information. For five years the League had petitioned the sovereign and the parliament; and now they thought it time to address themselves to those who made the parliament. They turned to the electors, and pledged themselves to be present and active at every election, and to contest every borough, till a parliament should be obtained which should repeal the corn-laws. They had good reason for confidence in this course; for they had just carried the city of London. Mr. Baring had been rejected for Mr. Pattison, the free-trade candidate; and an analysis of the votes had clearly shown that it was the casting-vote of the League—between the Conservatives and the Whigs—which had decided the election. And herein lay another evidence of the readiness of the League to take advice from its enemies, and profit by their taunts. In parliament, from the time the League

was first mentioned there, till the thing could be said no longer, we find speaker after speaker saying that the League had no influence in London, and could make no impression there. The League admitted to itself that it had far too little influence in London; and it resolved to try whether it could make an impression in that stronghold of monopoly. The West India interest was there; the Canada interest was there; and the shipping interest, and everything that shrank from thorough-going free-trade. These made London very difficult to gain; but, till London was gained, the aim could not be accomplished.

Associations were formed there, and district meetings held; but the area was too large to be conquered by such a method of attack. Weekly meetings of the aggregate London societies were held at the Crown and Anchor; but presently the Crown and Anchor would not hold half that came; and the remarkable step was taken of engaging Drury Lane Theatre for the Wednesday evening meetings. The first was held there on the 15th of March 1843. The tickets were all gone on the Tuesday afternoon; and the theatre was crowded in every part. Probably London will never witness a stranger spectacle than that which might now, for above two years, be seen—of one or other of the great theatres crowded from the floor to the roof by a multitude who came, week by week, to hear, for many hours together, nothing but political economy, all bearing on one point—the repeal of an obnoxious law. The interest, the emotion, the passion, aroused and demonstrated, equalled, and even transcended, all that had ever been manifested, when poetry, instead of dry science, occupied the scene. It is true, the speaking was most able and very various; and no deeper tragedies were ever presented there than some which were related as happening close at hand and every day, through an artificial restriction of food; but still, the audience went to hear political economy and statistics, and were so roused by appeals based on facts and figures that the cheering was at times almost maddening. None could mock and deride who had ever been there; but many did—even the prime-minister himself—while the thing was new, and regarded as a clap-trap, instead of what it really was—the most effectual way of

rapidly diffusing information, and exciting the spirit of enterprise needed for the proposed reform. The result appeared in the city election of the next November; and from that time we read of fewer jests, and of more appeals to government to 'put down the League.' It is needless to say that an association organised to obtain the repeal of an act of parliament, by means of a diffusion of information among electors especially, and everybody else afterwards, could not be 'put down;' and, from the time that the city of London elected a League candidate, and such landowners and agriculturists as Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord Spencer avowed themselves converts to League doctrines—all of which happened before the end of 1843—no minister could listen for a moment to the frantic entreaties of the Protectionists that their enemy might be crushed before their eyes. Like Mr. Baukes, they 'asked,' they 'besought,' they 'demanded' this of ministers; but ministers could only be silent, and leave the great association to pursue its strictly legal course. And among the Leaguers might now be found a man whose name was enough to make the owners of property pause before they assailed the association of which he had become a member. Mr. Samuel Jones Loyd, the banker, who had more interest in the security of property, and more knowledge how to secure it, than almost any other man in the city of London, had, in October, sent a letter to the League council, in which he intimated that he felt it right to overcome his reluctance to join any public body for whose acts he could not be responsible: 'The time is now arrived,' he wrote, 'when this must be overruled by other considerations of overwhelming importance. The great question of free-trade is now fairly at issue; and the bold, manly, and effectual efforts which have been made by the League in its support command at once my admiration and my concurrence.'

An incident is related in the chronicles of the year which, as it strongly excited curiosity within the cabinet, as well as elsewhere, may be hoped to have led to some consideration of the effect upon conscience of laws too bad to be observed. Under the head 'Remarkable Case of Conscience,' we find that a man who had given in an honest

return of the profits of his regular business, in paying his income-tax, had become conscience-stricken afterwards at having paid no tax on his income from smuggling; and that he therefore sent to the chancellor of the exchequer £14,000, as due on three years' profits. There is no appearance of his having any pain of conscience about smuggling, even to the enormous amount thus indicated, while so sensitive about paying a tax of which his mind approved. The most searching inquiries failed to discover who was the owner of a conscience in so instructive a condition; and the ministers were left with a lesson which some of them were beginning hardly to need. A more trifling anecdote evidences the feverishness of the time about the opinions of the premier on trade in corn. A Manchester manufacturer sent to Sir R. Peel two pieces of velveteen of a new and beautiful fabric, the device on which was 'a stalk and ear of wheat, grouped, or rather thrown together very tastefully, with a small scroll peeping from beneath, bearing the word "Free."' Sir R. Peel sent 'a handsome letter' of thanks and acceptance. The *Times* related the transaction; the *Standard* did the same, omitting all about the wheat-ears and the scroll. The *Morning Post* was scandalised at both, and the minister's acceptance of the gift. The quarrel attracted the minister's eye afresh to the velveteen, when he saw the scroll, and immediately returned the present, with an explanation that he had been unaware that 'any matters which were the subject of public controversy' were concerned in the transaction. The manufacturer, on his part, disclaimed any intention of embarrassing the minister, and published the correspondence, to allay the jealousy which had been excited.

In 1844, the efforts of the League became more distasteful than ever to their opponents. They took the registration in hand; and were soon able to give a precise account of 140 boroughs. No one could reasonably object to this part of the enterprise, as it was a method open to every party. It was made known to the hearers at the League meetings that there was no occasion ever to despair of the regeneration of any borough; and that it would be wrong to regard any as in a fixed condition of opinion. The constituency was renewed at the rate of from 10 to

15 per cent. annually, and was wholly changed in ten years. There was, therefore, every encouragement to strive to enlighten and inspirit the constituencies. It was by this time certain that a great accession of free-traders would be found in the House after the next election; and this, joined to the fact of the great changes within the House, shown by the decrease of the majorities against Mr. Villiers's annual motion, indicated that the final struggle could not be very far off. But prospects of infinitely greater importance were now opening—prospects of such vastness that the Leaguers themselves did not, as they have since said, by any means perceive the extent of their new enterprise. Their study of the boroughs led them to the contemplation of the counties, where their foes' chief strength lay; and that contemplation led Mr. Cobden to the discovery of a remedy for the false representation, or the non-representation of the bulk of the nation, by which the polity of Great Britain will be affected, probably down to the remotest posterity.

The operation of the Reform Bill was injured, and well-nigh ruined, by the Chandos clause. By this clause, which favoured the landowners by admitting their tenants-at-will on easy terms to the franchise, a great number of votes could be fabricated, by the putting together many partners in a tenancy-at-will. Brothers, sons, uncles, and every kind of relative, were made partners, and had votes under this clause; and thus, in the agricultural districts, the voters were one in twenty-two; and 'the landed interest' gained the counties, while in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire, the voters were only one in eighty of the inhabitants. In West Surrey, the voters were one to 26; and in Middlesex, one to 115. In considering how to lessen this prodigious inequality, and give a fair share of the representation to South Lancashire and the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire, Mr. Cobden found that the requisite power lay in the Reform Bill itself—in the forty-shilling freehold clause. Upon inquiry, it appeared that a house, the possession of which would confer the franchise, might be had for from £30 to £40; and it was clear that a world of difficulty and expense might be saved by the League undertaking all the part of the business

which the artisan can least manage for himself. If the League opened books for the registration of land and houses on sale, surveyed the property, prepared the conveyance deeds, and, in short, left to the purchaser nothing to do but to choose his property, pay for it, and take possession, there could be no doubt of the readiness of a host of artisans and operatives to invest their savings in this secure and honourable kind of property, rather than in any other mode. The plan was immediately set on foot; and before the year was out, the spectacle might be seen, so ardently desired by many philanthropists, of numbers of the working-class in possession of a plot of land and a house of their own; having, as Conservative politicians have been wont to say, 'a stake in the country.' It was well to provide for coming county elections; it was well to neutralise the vicious operation of the Chandos clause; but it was a far greater thing to have recurred to the benefit of making our working-classes citizens indeed by giving them the power of holding house or land by means of their own earnings; and to do this by a method suited to the time, and to the existing state of our civilisation—not by tempting them to depend on the land for subsistence, but only as an investment for their savings, after maintaining themselves by the species of labour which the time requires. A natural apprehension was widely expressed at first that the landowners would cut up their estates, as the Irish landlords had formerly done, and that the county constituencies would thus become depraved by the admission of mere creatures of the proprietors to the suffrage; but, as Mr. Villiers was at pains to explain, it was now too late for this to be done to any great extent. The landowners had already done their utmost; and in a very large proportion of cases, the land which was nominally their own was not really so. They had worked the Chandos clause of the Reform Bill to the utmost; and now they must leave to others the working of the forty-shilling freehold clause. The event, as far as it can be judged of at this day, seems to have proved that the Leaguers were right. They soon turned the scale in some of the counties; and the operation has been continued, with still increasing vigour, to this hour. The

working-men of the midland counties, who had nothing to do with the League in its day, have learned from it to invest their savings in the best way, and obtain political privileges at the same time; and the prodigious extent of their associations for the purpose enables them to conduct the business, and acquire their freeholds, at a less cost than Mr. Cobden himself could have dreamed of when he propounded his plan. Freeholds are now obtained by thousands at the rate of £19 each; and the working-men of the midland towns who can invest this sum from their earnings, to obtain political privileges, are a class of the constituency that every true statesman and lover of his country will welcome to the exercise of their rights.

In the course of their inquiries and action, the Leaguers discovered that the game-laws were of more importance, and more deadly injury, than even the best informed of them had been at all aware. They found that the law, which bears an appearance of impartiality—the law that the game on any land is the property of the occupier, unless he chooses to part with it—is utterly unavailing under the existing competition for farms. The competing farmers allowed the landlords to make any arrangement they pleased about the game, hoping that the hares and pheasants would, according to the promise of the landlord, not be allowed to increase to an injurious extent; a trust which was almost invariably found to be misplaced. The distress from this cause which came to their knowledge; the discovery that throughout the agricultural counties the expenditure of the peasantry was certainly larger than their apparent receipts, indicating a prevalence of poaching; the spectacle of jails overcrowded with prisoners, of whom the largest proportion were there for game offences; and the actual sight of hundreds of acres of produce destroyed by game—these things pointed out the game-laws as a subject of attack to the League; and Mr. Bright obtained, in 1845, a committee which sat in two sessions. The sporting interest is too strong in parliament to permit the due results to follow from the evidence obtained; but the information was not lost. Its purport was terrible beyond all expectation. It told that the direct waste of food through the ravages of game was equal in amount to

the income-tax. It told of distress caused to the farmers in all degrees, from an irritating diminution of profits down to causing utter ruin, as in the case of an honest farmer—an example of a common case—who was thus reduced, in spite of the most strenuous efforts, from being a capitalist, down, by mournful degrees, to the station of a labourer at 10*s.* a week. It told of oppression on the part of sporting magistrates, and of unlimited opportunity for such oppression. It told of fearful demoralisation in town as well as country, from the transactions connected with the sale of game. It told of the rousing of social and political discontents, in places where the hungering poor saw how much human food was devoured by hares and birds, and who felt how irreconcilable were the interests of the peasantry and the magistracy in regard to game. There was no need that it should tell of murders; for the newspapers of the day made known that part of the horror of the case. In January 1844, a gamekeeper of Lord Grantley's, the father of seven children, was found murdered by poachers. In March, a man named Lowther had a double certificate fine upon him, and thought, in his difficulty, of taking some of Lord Normanby's pheasants, wherewith to pay his fine. Being met, he shot Lord Normanby's keeper; and being tried, he was found guilty of murder. But these, and all lesser cases of injury, were unhappily of too common an order to produce much effect on the public mind. The event of the year, in regard to game catastrophes, was one which found its way to the hearts, and troubled the minds, even of some parliamentary sportsmen. The Earl of Stradbroke was well known as a strict game-preserver; and his conspicuous advocacy of all stringent game-law provisions in the House of Lords prevented any mistake about his views. We find him, in June of this year, urging amendments on the bill for the preservation of game by night—provisions for making more stringent a law already intolerably oppressive; and in August, the kingdom was shocked by the news that two of Lord Stradbroke's gamekeepers had committed suicide, on two successive days. From the evidence on the inquest it appeared that the poachers had done much mischief in the preserves, and that Easy, the first suicide, fell into despon-

dency, on hearing that Lord Stradbroke was coming down for the 1st of September. On the eve of that day, he shot himself through the mouth. The superintendent keeper, Cucksey, was supposed to take alarm lest he should be discovered to have removed pheasants' eggs from Easy's portion of the preserves, to make a better appearance in his own; and he shot himself the next day. Some little difference of tone is to be observed among legislators after this occurrence; a somewhat less stern assertion that the game was theirs, and that they would do what they chose with their own; a somewhat less virulent denunciation of the peasantry for helping themselves to wild creatures which they can never be made to regard as property, and for yielding to a temptation too strong for flesh and blood. For some time past, it had been rumoured that the home secretary was looking closely into the commitments for poaching offences, all over the country, to ascertain their legality; and some persons even ventured to anticipate a proposal from the government for the complete revision of the game-laws. In August, we find Lord Lilford saying in the Upper House that much observation had been occasioned by the home secretary having required from the governor of Northampton jail a return of summary convictions under the Game Act in that county; and Lord Lilford inquired of Lord Wharncliffe whether it was intended to cast any imputation on the magistrates of the shire. The reply was, that every county had been visited with the same requisition because it was known to government that great irregularities had occurred in the management of such cases. The evidence of the under-secretary for the home department, before Mr. Bright's committee in the next spring, disclosed such abundant reason for this inquiry that we do not wonder at hearing of no more resentment on behalf of magistrates. So many of the mere commitments were illegal that the home secretary made a jail-delivery of game offenders, extensive enough to render it prudent for the magistrates and their champions to drop the subject. Whenever the administration of justice in rural districts becomes a subject for legislation, as municipal reform has been in our time, the evidence of Mr. S. March Phillips, under-secretary for the home depart-

ment, before Mr. Bright's game-law committee, will suffice to show what that administration was up to 1845.

In the same August which brought the subject of the game-laws so often before the public, the *Morning Herald* announced that ministers were fully aware of the pernicious operation of the game-laws, and were contemplating a complete revision and large modification of them. It declared that the home secretary had kept a vigilant eye on the rural magistracy, ever since his entrance upon office, and had investigated every case of alleged severity; and it intimated that another session would hardly pass without a change of system. The next session brought about no change; nor has any subsequent session, except that hares are now deprived of some of the protection of sacred game. But public opinion has effected something of what legislation should long ago have done. Several noblemen and gentlemen—and in the first rank of these, the Duke of Bedford—have thrown open their preserves; and many more have given permission to their tenants to destroy hares and rabbits to any amount they please. A strong feeling of disgust at battue-shooting is spreading through all ranks, till we may hope it must reach the highest; and when battue-shooting comes to an end, the overthrow of the game-law tyranny is nigh. The genuine game-law system, derived from feudal times, and endeared to the aristocracy by feudal associations, was destroyed by the act which legalised the sale of game. The sport, thus degenerated into preserving game for battue-shooting, cannot long hold its ground against the indignities which now beset it, the wrongs of a suffering peasantry, and the spirit of agricultural improvement. Already our sportsmen are finding their way to the wilds of Norway and other countries, in pursuit of a truer sport than any that can now be procured at home. The Scotch moors also will be open for a long time to come. With these sporting-fields elsewhere, and the example of such [illegible]lords as the Duke of Bedford at hand, we may hope that the gentry who uphold in parliament a game-law which must make every statesman blush, will grow ashamed of insisting on their privilege and amusement, at the expense of ruin to the farmers, and corruption among the peasantry.

Between 1833 and 1844, there were 41 inquests on slain gamekeepers; and in 26 of these cases, verdicts of wilful murder were returned. In some of the rural counties, nearly half of the total commitments to jail were game cases; and the maintenance of the families of poachers, and the necessary enlargements of the jails, and employment of a numerous police, were heavy burdens to the occupiers of land—already much injured by the partial destruction of their crops. The convictions in England and Wales for breach of the game-laws for the year 1843 alone were 4529. It is computed that the expenditure occasioned by the game-laws, independent of the waste of food, amounts to more than that of the poor-law system. 'Within the last fifty years,' says our calm and judicial-minded expositor of the *Political Dictionary*, 'game has been preserved to an excess which was previously unknown. Most of the laws relating to game which have been passed within this period have been to enable game preservers to indulge in this taste; and to visit with greater severity those who are tempted by the abundance of game to become poachers. The accumulation of game in preserves, watched and guarded by numerous keepers, has led to changes in the mode of sporting. The sportsman of the old school was contented with a little spoil, but found enjoyment in healthful recreation and exercise, and was aided by the sagacity of his dogs. In the modern system of battue-shooting, the woods and plantations are beaten by men and boys; attendants load the sportsmen's guns, and the game is driven within reach of gun-shot, and many hundred heads of game are slaughtered in a few hours. The true sportsman would as soon think of spoiling a poultry-yard. . . . . The effect of protecting game by oppressive laws is, perhaps, more injurious to the morals of the rural population than any other single cause. The gentry of England are distinguished by many good qualities; but the manner in which many of them uphold their amusements at the cost of filling the jails with their poor neighbours, who acquire those habits which lead to the ruin of themselves and their families, is a blot on their character which has yet to be wiped off.' We must leave it to a future historian to assign the date of its obliteration.

CHAPTER XI.

Financial Statements of 1843, 1844—Sugar-duties—Mr. Miles's Motion —Crisis of Parties—Reduction of the 3½ per Cents.—Bank Act of 1844—Railway Extension—Railway Legislation—Delivery of Plans —Gauge Question—Poor-law Amendments—Post-office Espionage —Alien Act.

The financial statement for 1843 was looked for with some dread by all parties. It could not be otherwise than unfavourable. The long distress was not yet over; the income-tax could have yielded nothing yet; and the prodigious reduction of import-duties consequent on the alteration of the tariff must have operated immediately, and presented its worst aspect first.

On the 8th of May, Mr. Goulburn made his statement. Under some heads, there had been disappointment. Others indicated an improvement in manufactures and in the condition of the people. The deficiency was about £2,000,000; but the income-tax was certain to be more productive than had been supposed. The net revenue from it was likely to be about £5,100,000. On the whole, a small deficiency was left; but it was so evident that the worst was over with the customs, and that the produce of that department must increase as the benefits of a free-trade were experienced, that the surplus of a future time might be confidently reckoned on to pay up the present small deficiency. Two heavy charges of unusual character—for opium compensation, and to reimburse the East India Company for the Chinese war—might be paid out of the Chinese money to come in hereafter; but meantime, the sums must be advanced. No remission of taxation could be looked for under these circumstances; and the most vehement objectors to the income-tax had now nothing to say when asked what we should have done without it. The deficiency was owing chiefly to a falling off in the wine, spirits, and malt duties, from causes which could not have been anticipated—the expiration of the Methuen

treaty with Portugal, the spread of the temperance movement, and the badness of the malting season. One free-trade deed was done by parliament, this session, at the instance of ministers. The law was repealed which prohibited the exportation of machinery. This law had long been practically inoperative, as there is no machinery which cannot be sent abroad in portions under cover; and the only effect of the law, of late years, had been to make British machinery dearer on the continent than it need be, so as to enable the Belgian manufacturers to undersell the English. The English would henceforth have a fairer chance.

The financial statement of 1844 showed that the minister had been quite right in anticipating a revival of prosperity, and a surplus, larger or smaller. The surplus was large beyond every one's expectation, amounting to £2,700,000. It was clear that the distress was over for this time, and that all the great interests of the country were rapidly rising. The chancellor of the exchequer was pressed with proposals on every hand for the reduction of taxes; but he had to consider that the income-tax was, as yet, the only resource to fall back upon, and that its continuance beyond the next year had still to be debated. Bearing this in mind, he was disposed to apply the present surplus to the augmentation of the balance in the exchequer, only remitting duties on a few articles to the extent of £387,000 a year. Some amendments on Mr. Goulburn's proposals were moved, but not carried. The great conflict of parties was on the sugar-duties; and the struggle was, this year, a remarkable one, and no less beneficial than remarkable in one of its consequences—proving the strictness of principle and clear insight of the League leaders.

Year by year, the free-trade party in the House of Commons protested against the preference shown to colonial above foreign sugars; and Mr. Cobden moved a resolution, in June 1843, against the differential sugar-duty. The state of the revenue at that time furnished Mr. Goulburn with a sufficient plea for not then altering the duties; and he did not conceal that he was glad to avoid the risk of letting in slave-grown produce by a reduction of duty on foreign sugars. In the present year, however,

the plea of a deficient revenue was taken away; and not only so, but the improved condition and habits of the people, who were becoming consumers of tea and coffee at a perpetually increasing rate, required, Mr. Goulburn said, that provision should be made for a larger supply of sugar. Before negro emancipation, our West India colonies produced about one-third more sugar than was wanted at home; but after that date, while the production had diminished, the demand had largely increased. Some of the need had been supplied by parliament having brought East and West India sugars nearer, in regard to duty; but the price had risen 2*s.* per hundredweight in the year that was gone; and the demand was certain still to increase. While the legislature was about the work of altering the duties, it might as well provide some surplus of supply for a future rise of demand. Mr. Goulburn proposed to do this in a way which, as government believed, would reconcile an enlargement of the supply of sugar with fidelity to their anti-slavery principles. He brought forward two resolutions, by which, first, sugar certified to be the growth of China, Java, Manilla, or other countries where no slave-labour was employed, should be admitted at a duty of 34*s.*, the colonial duty remaining as before at 24*s.*; and, secondly, the queen should be authorised, at the same date, to proceed upon any existing treaties by which she was bound to admit the sugars of any foreign country on the same footing as that of the most favoured nation. This resolution related to Brazil, whose treaty with us would expire at that date.

By these propositions, the government separated itself from both the parties regularly opposed to each other on the sugar question—the West India interest and the free-traders; and hard work it was for Mr. Goulburn to maintain anything like a secure footing between them. The West India interest pleaded, as usual, the peculiarity and hardship of their case as a reason against any enlargement of the area of supply. They considered themselves entitled to the benefit of any rise of price that might take place from the increased demand. The free-traders pointed out that, as our consumption increased, slave-grown sugar would find its way somewhere—if not to us, to the

countries that supplied us; and that our discountenance of slave-grown sugar would thus be reduced to a mere sham. Lord John Russell's amendment in favour of admitting all foreign sugars at 34*s.* was rejected by a majority of 69; and Mr. Goulburn brought in his bill, which was read twice without debate. The 14th of June was the day when the House went into committee upon it. On that day, Mr. Miles moved as it had been decided by the West India body in the city that he should. There had been a meeting of that body in the morning; and they had agreed that Mr. Miles should propose a lowering of the duty on colonial and East India sugar to 20*s.*, instead of the 24*s.* proposed by government; and the raising of the duty on 'white clayed, or equivalent to white clayed' —partially refined—sugar of foreign free-labour production, to 34*s.*; the duty on brown or clayed being 30*s.* Mr. Goulburn objected that the leaving a differential duty of 10*s.* gave only precisely the same protection to colonial interest as he had proposed, while the loss of the 4*s.* on each sort would make a disastrous difference to the revenue. Not a few free-traders were caught by the temptation of an apparent reduction of 4*s.* on colonial sugars; but the better men of business of that party saw that Mr. Miles's proposition, if carried, would in effect merely establish a differential duty of 14*s.* between colonial and other sugar, put the 4*s.* per hundredweight into the pockets of the West India planters, and cause a serious diminution in the revenue. They would not countenance this, nor express any such acquiescence in any differential duty; they would rather wait till the next year, when the whole subject must come under revision and rearrangement, and when their present resistance to the bait of the Protectionists would give them a title to deference. Other people, however, were less clear-sighted or less virtuous. It was evident that here was an opportunity for trying with advantage whether the government could not be upset. Lord John Russell with his Whig tail went out into the lobby, mixed up with Lord John Manners and his 'Young England'—a good many wondering free-traders swelling the numbers. These free-traders wondered to find themselves in such company, and yet, to think that they should have left

Cobden and Ricardo, and Thornely and Warburton, behind. By means of this curious coalition and confusion, ministers were outvoted by a majority of 20. Mr. Cobden and the League immediately lost much popularity. It was only for a short time, and with people who could not see why he should prefer a duty of 24*s.* to one of 20*s.*, or why he should refuse his help towards overthrowing the administration, to bring in Lord J. Russell, with his 8*s.* fixed corn-duty. But it soon came to be understood, first, that Mr. Cobden and the League were sincere in their constant disclaimer of party purposes and party temper; and next, that the restoration of the Whigs to power could have brought us no nearer to free-trade. The Whigs could not have held power for many days at that time; the existing government had a majority of 90 on all party divisions; and there could be no question among political economists, of Peel and his comrades understanding free-trade better than the Whigs, as well as being more able to give it. When these things became clear, Mr. Cobden and the League stood higher than ever.

It was on a Friday night, or rather Saturday morning, that the important division took place, which gave a majority of 20 against ministers. On Sunday morning, a cabinet council was held; and at its close, Sir R. Peel went to Buckingham Palace, where he was detained to dinner. It was everywhere rumoured that the queen, then near her confinement, was strongly opposed to his resigning. On Monday, there was another cabinet council, while people out of doors were settling whether the minister would go out, or would propose, as the Whigs had done under a much more significant discomfiture, the continuance of the existing sugar-duties for another year. All day, lists of new ministries were made out, to pass the time till evening; and every Conservative who left his card at Sir R. Peel's door was noted and reported. The House was very full—many sick members having made an effort to come. It was evident that all parties had mustered their forces diligently. A dead silence prevailed when the premier rose to speak. His speech could hardly be an effective one, or delivered in his best manner, on an occasion so mortifying, and a subject so perplexed, and

implicating so much unsoundness. He neither offered to retire nor proposed the continuance of the existing sugar-duties. He declared his intention of adhering to the ministerial measure, exposed the difficulty of arranging the processes of government in regard to the sugar-duties, from the fact that the existing treaty with Brazil would expire on the 10th of November next, after which that country must be admitted on the same footing as the most favoured nation; while the expiration of the existing duties rendered it impossible to wait, and every one knew that the whole subject must undergo revision in the next session before it could be determined whether or not to renew the income-tax. The rival motion was not one of opposition of principle; it only proposed different amounts, and not a different proportion of duty; and there would therefore be no disgrace to the House if, on surveying the peculiarities of the case, it should reconsider its vote. If parliament had confidence enough in the existing administration to countenance and support its general principle of relaxing duties in ways which appeared safe and gradual, it might be expected not to thwart the government in regard to details of particular measures; and on this ground he asked for a reconsideration of the late embarrassing vote. This was granted him. In a committee of 488, Mr. Miles's proposition was rejected by a majority of 22. Two lasting consequences of this speech and division were, that the extreme Protectionists from that day drew off from Sir R. Peel, and hoped nothing more from him; and that his followers saw that there must be no faltering among them. The minister had a policy in view, clear and well defined; and he must carry it through, without being subject to misadventures through any instability of theirs. Now had been the moment for deciding whether he should be authorised to carry out his policy. It had been decided that he was; and now they were to support him without flinching or vacillation. The next year must be a great one, in regard to affairs of commerce and finance; and this was the preparation for it. The ministerial bill, after some further discussion in both Houses, stopping short of the point of endangering it, became law on the 4th of July.

As the prosperity of the kingdom advanced, and capital abounded, and the price of stocks rose, the holders of the 3½ per cent. consols became aware that they might soon expect to hear of a government plan for the reduction in that stock. Everybody said that such a reduction was a fair and proper means of diminishing the burdens of the country—the interest of capital being now very low, and likely to remain so. The anxiety was as to how it would be done. Mr. Goulburn brought forward his plan on the 8th of March 1844. The occasion was an important one; for the sum to be dealt with was larger than had ever before been taken in hand for regulation by the government, being little less than £250,000,000 of money. The plan of the chancellor was received with the utmost good-will and satisfaction; and no difficulty subsequently occurred. He proposed to deal with all the stock now comprehended under the 3½ per cent., except that constituted in 1818, which enjoyed some peculiar protections originally guaranteed to it. With regard to all but this, he proposed that the 3½ should be exchanged for 3¼ per cent. for ten years, and be reduced to 3 per cent. in 1854; being guaranteed against any further reduction for twenty years from that date. By this plan, the immediate saving would be £625,000 per annum for ten years; and after that, £1,250,000 per annum. The time allowed for dissent on the part of the holders was a fortnight for persons in England, three months for persons on the continent, and eleven months for everybody further off. The speech of the chancellor of the exchequer was cheered at intervals as it proceeded, and vehemently at the end; and a variety of speakers offered him compliments and congratulations afterwards. The resolutions proposed were passed unanimously, and the bill founded on them left the Lords on the 19th of the same month. The dissentients were extremely few, and the affair went off with unexampled smoothness. Mr. Goulburn took advantage of the occasion to remedy the inequality of payments in the different quarters of the year. All the interest due on the 3½ per cents. would be paid up to the 10th of October; so that a new start would be made from that day, and a nearly equal issue would be made in the summer and winter, as in the spring and

autumn quarters—to the easing of currency and commerce. The reason of the fervour with which the plan was hailed was that Mr. Goulburn had resisted the temptation of adding to the debt while obtaining present relief. He might have made a grander-looking measure by increasing the burdens of posterity; but the scheme he proposed would benefit a future, even more than the present generation; and generous acknowledgments of this merit were made on every hand.

It will be remembered that when a new charter was granted to the Bank of England in 1833, it was provided that, though it was a charter for twenty-one years, it might be modified at the end of ten years, on six months' notice being given by parliament. The ten years were now—in 1844—about to expire; and it was the minister's desire that the charter should be modified. It was the desire of the country at large that changes should be made; for the last few years had wrought deeply on the public mind in regard to currency matters. The fever of joint-stock bank speculation had subsided. Opinions of Mr. S. Jones Loyd and Mr. Norman—opinions clearly propounded before a parliamentary committee in 1840—in favour of a single source of issue of money, had become widely known, and intelligently embraced by a large majority of thinking persons; while, on the other hand, an extensive agitation had gone forward in favour of such an 'expansion of the currency,' in all times of pressure, as might buy off the pressure, and spread ease through the field of commerce. The intricate and abstract subject of currency had become so interesting to the many, that pamphlets advocating every view appeared in abundance; and not a few, both of the wise and the foolish, went through several editions. It is easy to understand how some of the most unwise became the most popular. When the small traders and artisans of the great towns were told that trade was always good when paper-money abounded, that a new issue of paper-money had relieved commercial distress as often as it had been tried, and that hardship and misery always attended a contraction of the currency, it was not surprising that they should read with avidity publications which described the bliss of an abundance of

money, and partly consoled them for past misfortunes by appearing to point out the cause of them. Publications more intelligent and more intelligible were read as eagerly as any novel by men of business who were aware that the wisest of us have only too little knowledge and insight on a subject of central interest and importance—a subject on which every man of business would gladly have a clear opinion if he could. On the whole, though the confusion of views was great, and the stragglers were so many as almost to defy classification, it may be said that there were three parties awaiting the exposition of the minister's views on currency and banking in 1844: the advocates of an inconvertible currency—of a paper circulation open to all comers whenever desired; the advocates of a legal declaration that paper-money was convertible, without other safeguard than legal penalties in case of mischievous transgression; and the advocates of a real security for such convertibility—security in the form of precious metal actually laid by under the same roof from which its representative bank-note goes forth. This last party were pretty generally aware beforehand that Sir R. Peel was about to declare in their favour, and that his measure would appear to be nearly what would have been recommended by Mr. Loyd and Mr. Norman. The country-bankers were so alarmed lest their privileges should be interfered with, that they held meetings and issued warnings, and strove to interest members of parliament in their case, that any proposal of restricting issues to a single body might be resisted at once. But their apprehensions on this point were premature. The minister believed that he could secure his end without going so far at present. All existing issues were to be allowed to go on; but no additions or successors were to be permitted. When this was once understood, the minister was able to obtain a more patient hearing for his scheme. It was on the 6th of May that he made his exposition, in a lucid and interesting speech of three hours long. It was received, not only with the deference commanded by the supremacy of the speaker on financial subjects, but with much complacency, on account of the simplicity of the plan which was to effect changes of deep import without any of that monetary

disturbance which had been dreaded as unavoidable. Men would have submitted to much in the hope of securing a sound system; but to have an apparently sound system offered to them, unaccompanied by temporary mischief, was beyond their hopes; and they were gracious accordingly. Their apprehensions never, however, had gone so far as to affect the price of stocks—the funds standing precisely the same the day before and the day after the delivery of Sir R. Peel's speech.

The view which can be taken here is briefly this:

If our commercial transactions were all confined within our own island, we should want no other basis for our paper circulation than national securities, such as stock and exchequer bills. The amount in circulation on these securities was supposed to be, as Sir R. Peel declared, about £22,000,000. The issue of these £22,000,000 was proposed to be divided between the Bank of England and the country-banks, in the proportion of £14,000,000 by the Bank of England, and £8,000,000 by the country-banks; such issue being upon other security than gold, as it was most improbable that gold would ever be demanded for notes so issued. But the circulation of the country is not £22,000,000, but £30,000,000; and this last item of £8,000,000 is the difficulty to be dealt with. It is the portion of our currency which is or may be concerned in our foreign commerce—in a department where our national securities are of no use; and a security must be provided which is of universal value—that is, gold. The gold wanted for the conduct of affairs in connection with foreign trade was assumed to be, at the utmost, £8,000,000; for before anything like that quantity could have been drained out of the country, prices would have fallen so low as to induce a large exportation of goods, and the return of the gold. It was now provided that gold should always be in store to the amount of all paper issues beyond the £22,000,000 based on national securities; and there could be no fluctuation in the amount of paper-money, otherwise than in proportion to the gold offered to the Bank of England. The bank was bound to buy with its notes all the bullion that was brought, at a trifle below mint-price. Thus, the gold brought in would surely be replaced by an

equal amount of paper. When gold was, on the other hand, drawn out, the paper that came in was to be cancelled —a new safeguard, and a most necessary one, as the bank had, up to this time, often reissued immediately the notes brought in, thus providing for a further drain of its gold at the very moment that it was draining out of itself. In case of joint-stock or other country-banks closing from any cause, it was provided that government might authorise the Bank of England to issue, on securities, notes to the same amount as the closed bank had out, the expense and possible profit of the transaction being set down to the public.

The hope from this scheme was that a perfect correspondence between paper issues and securities would be established. But there is an element involved in the case which introduces some confusion—the deposits in the hands of bankers. In quiescent times, the correspondence may be practically complete. But in times of speculation, when the stage of transactions by cheques and book-credits is past, when manufacturers have to extend their operations, and to obtain accommodation from bankers, notes get out through the wages of workmen, and raise prices. Prior to 1844, the employers, in their desire to hold on, obtained more and more aid from bankers, all the deposits coming forth, and raising prices, till nothing was left but sudden contraction, and the perils and miseries that attend it. Some check, it is true, had been imposed by the prohibition of notes under the value of £5; but this went but a short way, and the present measure was proposed mainly for the sake of obviating the protraction of the struggle after an access of speculation, and stopping the drain of gold in good time. It is believed to have answered this purpose to a great extent; but here the baffling influence of such an incalculable element as the deposits is perceived. They can still protract the struggle which the operation of the act of 1844 would otherwise bring to an end. As they do not yield loanable capital at such a time, the rise of interest may still act as if they had not come forth—may still act as a timely check by inducing foreigners to leave their gold with us, or to send in more; but the issue of the deposits does intercept the other timely check of a fall of prices, such as would induce exportation, and

bring back gold. This is a case which the act of 1844 does not meet; and its action is somewhat interfered with by it. Still, the gain, through that act, in shortening the struggle at the turning-point from speculation to collapse, is indisputably great; and the minister, in his expository speech, claimed sympathy from thinking men in his hope and expectation that it would be so.

The resolutions on which the bill was founded were brought in on the 20th of May, and agreed to after some debate; and thus parliament first declared in favour of the great change of separating the business of the Bank of England into two distinct departments—the one for the issue of notes, the other for the transaction of the ordinary banking function; a near approach to the adoption of a single bank of issue. There was at no stage opposition enough to endanger the bill. By the great majority of members of all parties it was earnestly supported; and when some few objected that it would not obviate commercial crises, they were met by the question, whether any legislation could neutralise an evil which would occasionally arise while men continue greedy after gain. If its tendency was to check and alleviate such crises, that was all that could be expected from any legislative provision. The bill became law on the 19th of July.

Some economists doubted at the time whether the unquestionable advantages obtained by this bill might not prove to be too dearly purchased; and since the stringent test to which the law was subjected in 1847, there have been more who have published an opinion that they are so. Men of such high authority as Mill, Tooke, and Fullarton have said so, while expressing themselves with the moderation—not to say hesitation—which the imperfection of our knowledge and experience on this difficult subject demands. Mr. Mill points out that extension of credit by bankers is a great benefit in a season of collapse —and the aid formerly yielded by the bank, at whatever cost afforded, was salvation itself in such a crisis as that of 1825–6; that the notes thus issued in aid do not circulate, but go where they are wanted, or lie by, or come back again immediately as deposits; that the new law does not allow expansion till gold comes for it, when the worst of

the crisis is over; and that, as banks must be the source of aid in crises, such an act as that of 1844 must, in such a season, be either repealed or suspended. The experience of 1847 suggests to Mr. Mill a yet worse objection. There are many causes of high prices besides that of undue expansion of credit. Prices may rise by war expenditure, or expenditure for critical political objects; by foreign investments in mines or in loans; by the failure of cotton crops or other raw material from abroad; and by an extraordinary importation of food from bad harvests at home. In these cases, the gold would not be drawn from the circulation, but from hoards and bank reserves; and in this case, the bank reserve is in effect a hoard. But the arrangement of the act for the securing of convertibility is aimed at a state of high prices from undue expansion of credit, and from no other cause. The result is that the paper-currency is contracted on occasion of every drain, from any cause whatever, and not merely when the gold is withdrawn from the circulation; and thus a crisis is, and must be, occasioned by every derangement of the exchange, or, at least, whenever there is pressure in the money-market. Before the crisis of 1847, there had been no speculation which could account for so terrible a collapse as took place in that year. The railway speculation of the time raised the rate of interest, but could not affect the exchange. The drain of gold was caused by the failure of the potato-crop at home, and the partial failure of the cotton-crop abroad; circumstances of great financial inconvenience, but not adequate to occasion such a collapse of commercial credit as ensued. The act of 1844 could not operate beneficially here, but, on the contrary, it wrought injuriously by compelling all who wanted gold for exportation to draw it from the deposits, at the very time that interest was highest, and the loanable capital of the country most deficient. If the bank might then, before there was any collapse of credit, have lent its notes, there would have been no crisis—only a season of pressure. As it was, it was necessary to suspend the act of 1844; and Mr. Mill, in conducting his review of the measure and its operation, of its advantages and disadvantages, avows that, in his opinion, 'the disadvantages greatly

preponderate.' Much as thinking men may have learned on the subject of currency within a few years, it is evident that more knowledge and experience are needed yet to bring us into a state of security.

Allusion has been made to an excess of railway speculation. Ten years before our present date, there was one railway in England—the Liverpool and Manchester—and in Scotland an awkward one of seven miles long. In these ten years, the system had extended to a magnitude which made it one of the chief boasts, and perhaps the most perplexing difficulty, of the time. Landowners were groaning over the spoliation of their estates, for which no pecuniary award could be any compensation. Their park walls were cut through—their 'dingles and bosky dells' were cut through—and their choicest turf, and their secluded flower-gardens. A serious conflict took place in November, in Lord Harborough's park in Leicestershire, between his lordship's tenantry and the railway surveyors, with the force they assembled. Railways were to run, not only along the southern margin of the island, and round the bases of the misty Scottish mountains, but through the vale in which Furness Abbey had hitherto stood shrouded; and among old cathedrals of which the traveller might soon see half-a-dozen in a day. It was on Easter Monday, 1844, that excursion-trips with return-tickets are first heard of. Here began the benefits of cheap pleasure-journeys to the hard-workers of the nation. The fares were much lowered; yet the extra receipts on the Dover line for three days were £700, and on the Brighton line, £1943. The process had begun from which incalculable blessings were to accrue to the mind, morals, and manners of the nation. From this time, the exclusive class was to meet the humbler classes face to face. The peer and the manufacturer and the farmer were henceforth to meet and talk in the railway carriage, and have a chance of understanding each other. The proud were to part with some of their prejudice, and the ignorant with some of their ignorance; and other walls of partition than park enclosures were to be broken down. The operative was to see new sights, hitherto quite out of his reach—the ocean, the mountain and lake, and old ruins and new

inventions; and the London artisan was to live by and by within sight of trees and green fields, and yet go to his work every day. As unwholesome old streets in London were pulled down, hamlets would rise up in the country, where he could live out of working-hours, his railway fare to and from business being included in the rent of his cottage. The diet of millions was to be improved—fish and foreign fruits being conveyed into the country, and milk, butter, and vegetables, fresh from the country, to be carried into the towns. Everybody's wants and wishes would become known by the general communication about to be established; and the supply would reach the want and the wish. The change was vast, and the prospect magnificent; but this change, like every other, had to pass at its outset through a wilderness of difficulty.

A rage for railway-making took possession of minds prone to speculative folly. Jealousy and competitive zeal sprang up; and lines were planned whose chief purpose seemed to be to injure each other. Rashness and knavery were all abroad; and the foolish and the ignorant were on the highway to ruin, as the prey of the rapacious, or in company with them. There was every probability that capital would be withdrawn to a fatal extent from the manufactures of the country, to be invested in railways which could only bury it at first, however productively it might reappear. Moreover, a prodigious power was now put into the hands of men and companies as yet irresponsible for their use of it. The public had no longer any option how to travel. In a little while, they must go nowhere or be carried by rail—however such a mode of travelling might disagree with their health or their inclination. This in itself was not an obstructive objection to a system fraught with general advantage; but as yet no provision was made against the abuse of the necessity which had arisen. Not only was everybody compelled to travel by rail, but the mode and the cost were at the pleasure of the railway proprietors, who might charge what fares they dared, and provide as they thought proper for the accommodation of passengers; no competition could be brought to bear upon the proprietors; and their treatment of the public was regulated by the accident of their

own feelings, the tempers of their agents, or their immediate view of their own interests. The question arose, what was to be done. There was much argument as to whether railways were or were not a monopoly; but there was a pretty wide agreement that the great new power which had arisen in the midst of us was too formidable to be left without legislative control. Early in the session of 1844, a select committee of the Commons sat to consider the best means of adapting the growing railway-system to the exigencies of the country.

The committee recommended a reduction of the deposit required by parliament to be made before introducing a railway. From one-tenth it was to be one-twentieth. Competing lines were the great difficulty. As the most prominent districts of the country had been first appropriated, almost every new line must be more or less a competing line. It was recommended that a committee should be appointed to settle which were competing lines and which were not; and then, any competing lines were to be referred to one committee, whose members must sign a declaration that neither they nor their constituents had any interest which could bias their minds in favour of either line. A bill was founded on the reports of the railway committee, which was passed before the end of the session, after an amount of debate which was natural under the novelty of the circumstances. There was much to be said in censure of the interference of parliament with commercial enterprises, with the regulation of fares, and with the construction of carriages. Men who held it a duty to interfere with manufacturers with regard to the construction of their mills, and the working of their machinery, and the hours of factory-labour, objected to interference with the great railway power, which held in its hand the locomotion of the nation; while again, some who protested against factory legislation called for legislative support of the claim of the public, and especially the poorer classes, to safe and comfortable, as well as cheap, travelling.

The act empowered the lords of the treasury to reduce fares, after a lapse of years, if the profits of any railway were found permanently to exceed 10 per cent., with a

guarantee for the continuance, for a term, of that rate of profit. It provided for the purchase by government, under certain circumstances, of any future railway, under an act of parliament to be obtained for the purpose. It provided for the frequent running of third-class carriages; for their being provided with seats, and covered from the weather; for their speed and convenient stoppages, and the amount of luggage and of charge—the charge being 1*d.* per mile, and the train being exempt from taxation. It provided for the conveyance of the mails, and of military and police forces, at certain charges, and for the establishment of electric telegraphs under proper conditions. Such, with numerous regulations of detail, were the provisions of the Railway Act of 1844. By an arrangement made in pursuance of a recommendation of the committee, the Board of Trade was charged with the new and onerous duty of overlooking the railway-system, both as to law and practice. Its business would be to examine and keep watch over all preparations for new railways, and all fresh schemes; to watch over the safety and the interests of the public, and to select from among rival plans. When it appeared that the amount of railway bills was likely to obstruct, if not to drive out, all other business from the House of Commons, and that 800 miles of railway were sanctioned in this session, besides all the proposals that fell through, from one cause or another, people began to ask how the Board of Trade for railways could possibly manage its responsibilities. When it came out that the estimated cost—usually less than half of the actual cost—was £1400 per mile for the 800 miles just sanctioned by parliament, the graver question arose, how the manufactures and commerce of the country were to sustain this vast abstraction of capital. While sanguine speculators were saying that the doings of this year were a trifle compared with what would be done next, the threatened absorption of capital caused serious alarm to the more enlightened, who better understood what proportion the importance of railroads bore to that of maintaining the manufactures of the country. Such persons foresaw that the new Bank Act would not wait long to be put to a stringent test.

The doings of the year *were* a trifle compared with those of the next. There was a want of harmony between the railway-officers of the Board of Trade and the committee of the House of Commons. Railways recommended by the one were rejected by the other; and many which were condemned at the Board of Trade were successfully pushed in the House. The railway department of the Board of Trade was therefore completely remodelled in July 1845. No reports on the merits of projected lines were henceforward to be offered; but it was requested of parliament that the Board might be furnished with the fullest information about all railway schemes, including sketches, plans, and sections of the lines, in order to a due supervision of the system and its details. As for the House of Commons—it was obliged to set aside the standing-orders about its railway committees, and to take the projects in groups, which were arranged by a new classification committee. The committees sat almost constantly—even during adjournments of the House—yet they failed to get through nearly all the business offered them. Some schemes could not obtain a hearing at all; others which had been considered safe, were left over to the next session, under a special provision that such business should be taken up where it was now left. Other delays were occasioned by the requisition of the Board of Trade of more plans and statements. While such was the condition of things in connection with the House, the excitement elsewhere was prodigious. Newspapers for railway topics were springing up in considerable numbers; and the *Railway Times* for September 27, had nearly eighty quarto pages filled with advertisements. The journals of the time tell that 332 new schemes were proposed before the month of October in this year, involving a capital of £270,950,000, and for which upwards of £23,000,000 would have to be deposited before an act could be applied for. A multitude of other schemes were in an incipient state; and there were sixty-six foreign railway projects in the English market. It was believed that altogether the number of plans which would be brought to the door of the Board of Trade by the expiration of the closing-day would be 815. The number which succeeded in obtaining

admission was above 600. The closing-day was the 30th of November.

As the summer closed and the autumn wore on, the most desperate efforts were made to get ready these plans. One lithographic printer brought over four hundred lithographers from Belgium, and yet could not get his engagements fulfilled. The draughtsmen and printers in the lithographic establishments lived there, snatching two or three hours' sleep on the floor, or on benches, and then going dizzily to work again. Much work was executed imperfectly; and much was thrown over altogether. Horses were hired at great cost, and kept under lock and key, to bring to town at the last moment, plans prepared in the country. Express trains were engaged for the same purpose; and there were cases in which railway directors refused such accommodation to rival projectors, obliging the clerks in charge of the plans to hasten round some other way, with every risk of being too late. At the Board of Trade, every preparation was made for the pressure of the closing-day. The day was Sunday, a circumstance which had been overlooked when the date was fixed. A large establishment of clerks was in readiness; and the work went on with some quietness till eleven at night. It had been settled that all applicants who were actually in the hall before the clock struck twelve should be considered to be in time; and during the last hour, the crowd became inconvenient, and the registering could by no diligence keep pace with the applications. The calling of the agents' names, as a summons to the inner-office, was listened to with nervous agitation by the expectants in the lobby; and there was a large crowd outside which amused itself freely with the bustle of the arrivals, and the masses of papers that were carried in. Twelve o'clock began to strike, and the doors were closing, when an agent pushed his way in. As the clock had not done striking when he arrived, he was, after some parley, admitted. No more came for a few minutes; but before the quarter had struck, a post-chaise, with four reeking horses, dashed up—three gentlemen rushed out, each loaded with a mass of papers, and found the door at the end of the passage closed. The crowd shouted to

them to ring the bell; and one of them did so. A police inspector opened the door; and as soon as it appeared that he was not going to admit them, the agents threw their papers into the hall, breaking the lamp that was burning there. The papers were thrown out again; and once more in and out, when the door was opened. One of the agents told his story to the crowd, who laughed heartily at it. The post-boy did not know London streets, and could not find the Board of Trade. He had been driving the agents about the streets of Pimlico ever since half-past ten. This was a comic ending, in the eyes of the thoughtless, of the competitive railway struggle of 1845; but all thoughtful persons felt very gravely about it. If this mass of railways could be constructed, the operation would be fearful upon the manufacturing interests of the country; and if not, what loss must befall a host of ignorant and unwary speculators! It would be the scene of 1825–6 over again. If the promoters of these projects believed that they could succeed, it was a serious thing to have among us so many men of education so ignorant of political economy, and so senseless about social affairs. If they did not so believe, but hoped to profit by the ruin of their neighbours, it was a serious thing to have among us so many men of education of a morality so loose and low. It was a painful exhibition, whichever way it was looked at.

The Great Western Railway had been constructed on a broader gauge than others, and the disputes about the comparative merits of the broad and narrow gauge ran high. There could be no dispute, however, about the mischief of the co-existence of the two. Goods sent from Birmingham and other places were stopped on reaching the Great Western at Gloucester, and had to be shifted into another train. The delay and injury thus caused were great; and there was a loud demand that the Great Western—which had at work only 274 miles of length, while there were 1901 miles of the narrow gauge—should conform to the gauge of other railways. In June 1845, Mr. Cobden moved for an address to the sovereign, praying for the appointment of a royal commission, to inquire into the merits of the broad and narrow gauge, and into the best method of getting rid of the evil of 'the break of

gauge,' and of securing uniformity henceforth. The commission asked for was appointed, and made a long report the next year. The commission reported, on the whole, in favour of the narrow gauge, and recommended that the Great Western should be accommodated to it; a change which would cost only about £1,000,000. The railway board framed a bill which departed from the recommendation of this report. It recognised the narrow as the national gauge henceforth; but did not propose to alter the Great Western. On the contrary, it proposed to construct various branches of that line on the broad gauge also. Their bill, which was passed, disappointed the commercial public, and everybody else who saw that uniformity of gauge must be secured sooner or later, and that the longer it was put off the greater would be the difficulty, while serious injury was meantime daily inflicted.

It was related, in our narrative of the preparation of the poor-law, that some discontent was occasioned by that clause of the amended law by which the maintenance of illegitimate children was thrown upon the mothers; that the effect of this provision was manifestly and immediately good; but that a mistaken sentiment, injurious to the true interests of woman, caused a modification of the law in 1839, by which it was rendered more easy to reach the putative father, and compel him to bear the burden. A further change was made this year, in consequence chiefly of the discontent existing among the Welsh peasantry on account of the bastardy law. Rebecca and her daughters insisted upon this as one of their chief grievances; and the commissioners of inquiry into the state of Wales reported the complaint emphatically. The consequence was that a bill was framed and passed, by which the mother was enabled to make application against the father, instead of its being made by parish-officers; and a stronger compulsion was brought to bear upon the father. The same act made some alterations in the proportion between rates and rateable value; empowered some large towns to provide asylums for the houseless poor; and enabled the commissioners to combine parishes and unions in their several districts into school districts, and also into districts for the audit of accounts.

On the 14th of June, which was Friday, the House of Commons was startled by the presentation of a petition, the news of which produced strong excitement in London and the country during the non-parliamentary days of Saturday and Sunday. Four persons, of whom two were foreigners and two Chartists, sent up a petition, by the hands of Mr. Duncombe, complaining that letters which they had posted within the last month had been detained, broken open and read, by certain of the authorities belonging to her majesty's Post-office. The petitioners declared 'that they considered such a practice, introducing as it did the spy-system of foreign states, as repugnant to every principle of the British constitution, and subversive of the public confidence, which was so essential to a commercial country.' They begged for a commission of inquiry, which should afford redress to themselves, and future security to all letter-writers. Mr. Duncombe desired an explanation, as he had warned the home secretary that he should do. Sir James Graham refused to explain more than that the allegations in the petition were in part untrue—the letters of three of the signers having never, to the best of his belief, been meddled with; that, with regard to the fourth, he had acted in accordance with a law which had been renewed so recently as 1837; that, by that law, the secretaries of state had the power of opening and detaining letters; and that, under this sanction, he had issued a warrant, since destroyed, for opening the letters of one of the petitioners. He would not say which of the four it was; but Joseph Mazzini was universally understood to be the one.

Sir James Graham himself, as a true Englishman, could hardly quarrel with the excitement caused in the House and the country by this disclosure, though the popular indignation was directed against himself. It was a case in which the national heart and mind might well be excused for pronouncing judgment prior to the production of evidence. The evidence must now come out; and the home secretary knew how it would at last modify opinions about himself, and set him right with the nation; but meantime, though he had to run the gauntlet through a long and bitter infliction of insults, he would, as a

benevolent statesman, rather endure this than have seen the people apathetic or capable of levity about such a matter as the violation of epistolary confidence. His probation was terrible. The most cool and cautious newspapers gave out their cool and cautious reprobation of the act; and there was hardly a public print, a public speaker, or perhaps a private family, that did not heap insults or expressions of disgust upon his name. Advertisements of secure envelopes met the eye everywhere, and anti-Graham wafers were shed abroad. Caricatures represented the home secretary as the spy of foreign potentates, and the tool of his brother-secretary for foreign affairs. Hundreds of people began to be sure that their letters had been tampered with. Testimonies to Mazzini's virtues appeared in the London journals; and obscure individuals rashly offered themselves as the medium of the correspondence of foreigners henceforth, under the impression that we were living under a spy-system, which would not allow the exile to pour out his heart to his nearest relations till the government had first heard what he had to say. Here and there, an honourable and trusted person—as Mr. Warburton—defended Sir James Graham; but this only deepened the astonishment. Here and there, some rational person, as much a lover of liberty as the petitioners themselves, pointed out that we have no passport system, and now no stringent alien supervision; and that such a power of letter-opening as the law gave to the secretaries of state was absolutely necessary for the frustration of conspiracy at home, and to prevent our country from becoming a nest of conspiracy against foreign governments in alliance with us; but such explanations excited little but indignation. And this was very well. It not only evidenced the honest and generous feeling of Englishmen on a matter of high morality; it enhanced the merit of the support given to Sir James Graham by other and rival statesmen when the right time came, and the impressiveness of his justification when the committees of inquiry presented their report.

There was a committee of each House—secret, of course, but composed of men who commanded universal confidence. Their reports were in the hands of the public

in August; and they settled the question, without any alteration of the law. It appeared—to the astonishment of the nation, which had lost all remembrance of the fact—that the Post-office was established on the express condition, notified in the preambles of the acts, that the government should be entitled to inspect any letters that it chose. In the old, half-barbarous times, the people were willing to have their letters conveyed speedily and safely on that condition. The power had since been revised and confirmed; and, at the last date, in the year of Queen Victoria's accession. There was no doubt about the law of the case; and indeed there had been none, since ex-ministers of all parties had got up, one after another, in parliament, to avow that they had used the power. Lord Tankerville testified to the existence of a warrant signed by Mr. Fox in 1782, ordering the detention and opening of all letters addressed to foreign ministers; and of another warrant, directing that all letters addressed to Lord George Gordon should be opened. Lord Normanby had used the power in Ireland, for the detection of 'low Ribbonism which could not be ferreted out by other means.' Lord J. Russell had held Sir J. Graham's office in the full conviction that the law gave him the power under investigation, and that the sole question was how it was used. On this point, the report of the committee was eminently satisfactory with regard to the conduct of Sir James Graham. He had not only done nothing more than had been done by all his predecessors, but he had been more scrupulous and more careful. He had seen the warrants destroyed at the first possible moment; whereas other ministers had been careless in allowing them to remain in existence. The specification of the number of warrants issued during a long course of years effectually calmed the public mind. From 1799 to 1844, the number of warrants issued was 372—that is, a fraction above eight in a year; but, when it is considered that the average is so greatly exceeded in years of alarm as to amount to 28 in 1812, 20 in 1842, 17 in 1831, 16 in 1839, and so on, the Post-office may be considered practically inviolate; and it has since been so considered. The conclusion drawn from the whole inquiry was, that

it would not be desirable to deprive the government of this power of frustrating conspiracy, in extraordinary cases; nor yet to surround the power with new legal restrictions which would raise it into a fresh and pernicious importance in the eyes both of rulers and the people. No steps, therefore, were taken in consequence of the reports, which had answered their purpose in bringing out a knowledge of the law and the facts of the case, for the benefit of all parties.

One reason for the vehemence of indignation displayed on this occasion was that a rumour prevailed that Signor Mazzini's letters had been examined at the desire of the Sardinian minister, who thus made the British cabinet a tool of foreign despotism. This was put an end to by a few words from the Duke of Wellington: 'He was enabled to state that there was no foundation whatever for these rumours.'

The new Alien Act of this session, its enlarged scope, and the perfect indifference with which it was received, show that Great Britain had no particular sympathy with the jealousies and fears of foreign despots. For some years past, the registration provisions of our alien law had been practically useless. The act contained no provision for enforcing any penalty on the omission to register; and foreigners omitted it whenever it suited them. In 1842, out of 11,600 foreigners officially known to have landed, only 6084 registered under the act. Out of 794 who landed at Hull in that year, only one registered; at Southampton, out of 1174, not one; and at Liverpool, no account whatever was kept of the foreigners who arrived. The time was clearly come for removing all impediments, real or nominal, to the settlement of foreigners in England. It would have been done very long before, but for the perpetual opposition of popular prejudice. The popular prejudice against aliens now seemed to be worn out; and the thing was done—liberally and thoroughly. Without delay, and at a trifling cost, foreigners could now secure the privileges of native subjects. They could secure from the secretary of state a charter of naturalisation more liberal than parliament could formerly confer. The only exclusion

was from parliament and the council-board; and even this exclusion might be cancelled, through an appeal to parliament. The new privileges were to extend, as of course, to aliens already resident in the country; and all women married to British subjects were naturalised *de facto*. Such was the scope of the measure of which Mr. Hutt, the mover, said: 'He believed it would be productive of much real practical advantage, and that it would conduce to the reputation of the country. He had to express his acknowledgments to Sir R. Peel for much kindness and encouragement. In other times, attempts to settle this question on a sound and liberal basis had more than once convulsed the whole nation, and proved fatal to the existence of governments. To have been permitted to bring such a question to a final and peaceful conclusion, was very gratifying to his feelings.'

So far was this measure from convulsing the nation and perilling its rulers now, that we find the *Spectator* observing, the week after its passage, that it had 'escaped the notice of the newspapers.' Such was one of the effects of the enlightening and tranquillising influences of long-continued peace.

CHAPTER XII.

Antagonism in Europe—Russia—The Caucasus—Servia—Cracow—Russian Jews—The Czar and Pope Gregory XVI.—Portugal and Spain—Switzerland—Hanover—Sweden—Turkey and Egypt—Route to India—France—War Spirit—Right of Search—Death of the Duke of Orleans—Royal Visits—Tahiti—Spanish Question—Death of the Duke d'Angoulême—Boulogne Invasion—Napoleon's Remains—Algeria—M. Guizot in 1842—American Relations—The Frontier—Right of Search—'The Creole'—'Repeal' Sympathy—'Repudiation'—Texas and Mexico—Boundary Question—Oregon Question.

THE mere existence of the rumour that the Sardinian government was jealous of the residence of Signor Mazzini in England points to a popular expectation of troubles in Italy, and, as a consequence, among the despotisms of

Europe. It was so. Signs of approaching struggle multiplied to watchful eyes; and while Eastern despotism and the claims of Western civilisation were falling into a position of antagonism more distinct every day, the free nations of Western Europe, who must form the main strength on one side when the war of opinion should at length break out, were grievously disposed to quarrel among themselves.

A traveller in Russia reports a certain Prince K. to have pointed out to him that Russia is now only 400 years distant from the invasion of barbarians, while Western Europe boasts an interval of 1400; and that an additional civilisation of 1000 years makes an immeasurable change in the mind and manners of a people. The conviction was now spreading everywhere that peoples separated by the civilisation of a thousand years could not much longer live in alliance and apparent peace; and that henceforth the more civilised party would have no release from watching the other, till the outbreak should happen that must decide which of them should prevail. In Western Europe, government had for many centuries been a purely political institution, constantly admitting more and more of the democratic principle. In Russia, which is even now more Asiatic than European, government is a religious institution; the emperor stands before the eyes of his people as their priest, and in their catechism as a god. In proportion as communication of persons and of ideas increases, such differences as these must come into collision. If the czar means to keep the mind of Russia from encroachment first, and revolution afterwards, it is necessary for him to guard his frontier well, and to uphold, as his outer defences, all existing despotisms. Whenever, therefore, these existing despotisms were perilled from within or from without, peace with Russia became more precarious, and the eventual outbreak was felt to be drawing on. The emperor was, and is, in the habit of saying that nothing is further from his thoughts than conquest; that he has as much territory as any man can possibly wish for; and that he has enough to do to cherish and improve his Russian subjects. Supposing this to be perfectly sincere, it may become necessary, according to his views—

indispensable to the cherishing of his native subjects—to extinguish communities which hold dangerous ideas. If that extinction should be tried where the work is easy, this is a sufficient reason for watchfulness on the part of the Western peoples. If it should be difficult, the struggle would be precisely that war of opinion for which the Western peoples were warned by political philosophers to prepare.

What vigilant eyes could see was this. The emperor lost no opportunity of insulting the King of the French. Since the revolution of 1830, he had behaved with increasing rudeness; and now his temper was becoming as bitter as it had always been overbearing. In August 1842, the King of Prussia had issued an ordinance calling together the elements of a popular representation; and from that moment, Russian relations with Prussia became cool, distant, and threatening. In September 1843, there was a revolution in Greece—a revolution so needed, and so universally desired, that the people obtained a constitution without any struggle, and England and France, and even Austria, uttered not one word of rebuke or remonstrance; but, when the Greek assembly began its sittings, an armed Russian steamer appeared at the Piræus, the Russian ambassador was summoned on board, and he was carried off without being even allowed to land. He was dismissed with disgrace from the service of the emperor, and his papers seized. At the same time, the brightness of Russian favour shone on the court at Vienna during a conference which was held there—a conference ill suited to the date of 1844. Plenipotentiaries from the German states met Prince Metternich at Vienna, to hear from him how perilous was the popular desire for an extension of the powers of the chambers. 'It perverts youth,' said the gray-headed minister, 'and seduces even men of mature age.' It was settled at this conference that any extension of the rights of the chambers was a direct injury to the rights of the crown; that, in case of any appeal by the chambers to the constitution, the government alone should be the interpreter of the constitution; that the acts of the chambers, while legal, should stand, as far as the government should think proper; and so on, through a series of

twenty resolutions, all consonant to the czar's modes of thinking, and certain to insure that brilliant favour with which he was now regarding the Austrian court. In the Caucasus, the emperor was pushing the war with the desperation of despotic wrath. In one season, the fever cut off 5000 of his soldiers; and his forces were surrounded by fire in the forests, obstructed by barricades at all openings, and crushed in the passes by rocks rolled from above; 2000 officers were slain in one campaign, and the general-in-chief, Woronzoff, appeared with a countenance of deep melancholy at its close—melancholy on account of slain comrades and his suffering forces; yet was every officer disgraced who made any failure in any expedition against the Circassians; and the Circassian patriots were spoken of and treated as vermin, fit only to be exterminated. In Servia, again, he appeared as an avenging despot, after having declared himself, in the Treaty of Adrianople, the protector of Servia, granting certain rights and liberties to the Servians. The Servians expelled a prince whom they detested, and elected one whom they loved. Turkey let them alone; but Russia interfered, proscribing, banishing, insisting on new elections, terrifying the people into submission, but by no means increasing their love for Russian protection, or their desire for Russian intercourses. We are told by an authority worthy of all respect, that since the strange accidents which caused the Russian army to be encamped at Paris, not only has Russia declared herself the protector of the cause of monarchy in Europe, but her people have become fully persuaded that, as other states fall to pieces under the explosive force of the democratic principle, Russia is to put them together again, and dispose of them at her pleasure. Absurd as this notion appears to us, it is sedulously declared wherever Russia has partisans, and especially in Germany. It appears to have been in the discharge of his assumed vocation that the czar achieved the last act of despotic meddling which falls within the period of our history—the extinction of the independence of Cracow, in 1846. It has been related how Cracow was insulted and overborne in 1836; in February 1846, the Austrians, who held the city, were driven out by those who conceived themselves the proper

inhabitants, and who were exasperated into the adventure of striking one more blow for the liberties of Poland. They were supported by an extensive insurrection in Silesia, and for a time held their ground wonderfully. But they could not long resist the pressure of the three great powers who now united to overthrow for ever the independence they had bound themselves by treaties to protect. The Austrian forces took the town of Podgorze, which commands Cracow from the opposite bank of the Vistula; the Prussian general, De Felden, invested Cracow, and the Russian troops marched into the city, without opposition. Without opposition, because all the inhabitants had fled except the aged and children. The three protecting powers presently settled the case of Cracow among themselves. As the treaties of 1815 were entered into among themselves, they could not see that the rest of the world had anything to do with the fate of Cracow, except to hear the news; and in November, therefore, they merely announced, with a condescending exhibition of reasons, that the republic of Cracow was no more; that the treaties were revoked; and that the city and territory of Cracow were annexed to, and for ever incorporated with, the Austrian monarchy.

As he held his position by a religious as well as political tenure, it was impossible for the czar to tolerate varieties of religious faith. The Jews were made to feel this in 1843. By a ukase issued in that year, all Jews residing within fifteen leagues of the frontier were compelled to sell their goods on the instant, and repair to the interior of the empire. All who could not convince the government that they held a position of which government was to be the judge, were sentenced to banishment to the steppes. The Jews were to be subject henceforth to recruiting for military service; and their children were held at the disposal of the emperor for the naval service. For some time, the pope and his church had met with insolent treatment from the great potentate of the Greek Church; and by this time it was clear that the pope was growing submissive through long-continued alarm. As his tone became subdued, that of the czar grew gracious; and in 1844, he restored his suspended diplomatic relations with Rome, by sending thither one of his ablest ministers from

Constantinople. The chief ground of quarrel was supposed to be the persecution of the Poles by the emperor, on account of their faith, and his oppressive attempts to bring them over to the Greek Church. When there was reason to believe that the aged and timid pontiff was willing to listen submissively, the czar discovered that the air of Palermo would be good for the health of his empress; and he was presently standing before the old pope in the Vatican, giving an account of his treatment of the Latin Church in Poland, and listening to a more spirited remonstrance than it was at all his custom to hear. He wore a respectful air, knowing that the pontiff, then in his eightieth year, could not live long, and that it was inconceivable that the next pope could have equal zeal for the Church, while events were showing that civil disturbance of every kind was in preparation. And the pope did die in the next year, leaving an inheritance of hopeless trouble to his successor.

Pope Gregory XVI. had been pontiff since February 1831. Able as a propagandist, he was wholly unfit for civil rule; and the abuses of his realm were unreformed in his time, and so aggravated as to keep his subjects in a restive state, and all the despotic monarchs of Europe in a condition of perpetual alarm. With certain of the sovereigns he was on strange terms. We have seen something of his relations with the czar. He granted to France, most unwillingly, the liberty of dealing harshly with the Jesuits; and he enjoyed, as his recompense, the friendship of the Orleans family and cabinet. His feud with Prussia about the affair of the Archbishop of Cologne was most serious—serious enough, if the world had been three centuries younger, to have plunged all Europe in war. A more perplexing close of the controversy was avoided by the prudence of the new sovereign of Prussia. Frederick-William III. died in June 1840. His son declared an amnesty, which included the religious disputants among others. Then followed words of peace on both sides—conciliatory charges on the part of the prelates—declarations of satisfaction on the part of the king. The pope yielded nothing which the most zealous churchman could reproach him for; and the new King of Prussia evaded a perilous

controversy with the papacy. In his civil government, Gregory XVI. was eminently unsuccessful. When the outcry about Signor Mazzini's letters being opened was raised in England, there was a universal presentiment that popular risings in Italy might be expected. The pope had broken his promises of reform; his cardinals had governed with cruelty, as well as with their usual want of sense and knowledge of the men of their century; and the year before his death was embittered to the old pontiff by fierce insurrections throughout his dominions. The manifesto of the insurgents, exhibiting his broken promises and his acts of tyranny, must have struck upon his heart; and for a few days there seemed reason to suppose that the revolutionary party might succeed. Town after town declared against the ancient tyranny; and the papal troops went over to the liberals. But a battle at Ravenna closed the struggle, by defeating and dispersing the insurgents. All was over for this time, but everybody was aware that it was only for a time. Italy was, of all the countries of Europe, the choicest skirmishing-ground for the coming war of opinion; and the papal realm, again, the choicest within the bounds of Italy. It was no great gain to set against these perils, that Rome was once more on good terms with Portugal, and was about to be so with Spain. The frequent revolutions in these countries, and the constant state of turbulence, in which the clergy suffered dreadfully, had long ago alienated the holy see. By the mediation of Austria, Portugal was reconciled with Rome; and in 1846, it was a topic of warm discussion in the cortes whether Spain, already in friendly negotiation for the same object, might enter into a state of perfect affiliation, if the mediation of England were sought, rather than that of France accepted. It was very well that there should be peace among those courts; but all three were so profoundly weak that it mattered little to the welfare of any but themselves what terms they were on.

In Switzerland there was much confusion during this period; warfare between the aristocratic and the democratic principles, and between the Catholic and Protestant faiths. It was not conceivable that the conflict of opinion should be brought to a close there, when it was kindling

in other parts of Europe.—In Hanover, the king was growing tired of hearing of poor officers' widows; and he issued an ordinance regulating the love-affairs of all the officers of the Hanoverian army. They were not to betroth themselves without his permission; and the requisite permission was to be obtained by methods of application which it is astonishing that the most antique despot of our time should have dreamed of proposing to any body of men whatever. The ordinance can be regarded only as a decree for the increase of invalid marriages.—Meantime, old Bernadotte, the most successful of Napoleon's generals and monarchs, was gone. He came out of the Pyrenees as a private soldier, though a man of education. He died, in peace and beloved, the King of Sweden and Norway, leaving a son to succeed him who was more ready than he had proved himself to reform some of the grossest social and political abuses of the old feudal kingdom of Sweden, while cordially respecting the more democratic constitution of Norway. Charles John XIV. of Sweden died in March 1844, on his eighty-first birthday, after a reign of twenty-six years.

Thus far, the movements and events that we have briefly detailed have been those in which Great Britain was not immediately concerned. Every incident, in a time when trouble and turbulence are on the increase from year to year—even from month to month—must concern every nation in the world; but our country had only to look on in regard to the events which have been related, whereas in others she had to judge and act.

In pursuance of their object of keeping Russia in check by preserving Turkey, the governments of England and France exerted themselves vigorously, in 1839, to prevent the threatened war between Turkey and Egypt. If, as seemed very possible, the sultan should be beaten by his powerful vassal, the czar might send his ships into the Bosphorus. The thing to be done was to prevent Turkey from being so weakened as to afford a pretext for this dangerous aid. The Pacha of Egypt declared himself ready for an accommodation; but the sultan was too highly offended by the haughty assumptions of his vassal to give up the hope of punishing him; and he declared

this war to be a duty required of him by his function of high-priest of Islamism. War was proclaimed—the pacha and his son declared to be deposed—and the fleet ready for sailing, early in June 1839. Syria was the field of conflict; and everything seemed to depend on whether the Syrian population would or would not rise against the Egyptians. Some observers declared that the Syrians hated the Egyptians; others, that they favoured them. The truth appears to have been, that their taxation under Egyptian rule was very oppressive, but that other causes swayed the likings of large bodies of the people; as, for instance, the toleration afforded to the Christians by Egypt—a toleration never to be expected from the Porte. On the first meeting of the armies, Ibrahim, the heir of the Egyptian viceroyalty, won a splendid victory. Before the news of the defeat of the Turks could reach Constantinople, the sultan was dead. His son and successor was only seventeen years of age. His accession afforded an opportunity for a change of policy. He changed his ministers and his ambassadors at the European courts; and then offered to Mohammed Ali pardon and the perpetual succession of his family to power in Egypt, if he would submit and be at peace. The pacha declared himself willing to do so if the dominion over Syria and Candia were secured to his family, as well as that of Egypt.

The five powers—England, France, Russia, Prussia, and Austria—here assumed the management of the affair. While their envoys consulted in London, the French and English fleets cruised in the Levant to keep the truce. The case was now much perplexed by the Turkish admiral having carried his ships to Alexandria, and put them into the power of the pacha. A suspicion was abroad that the French government encouraged the pacha to retain this fleet, when he would otherwise have given it up; and at the same time, it was whispered in London, and thence spread into other countries, that three of the five powers would make the restitution of the fleet and the surrender of Syria indispensable conditions of the pacha's retaining even the hereditary dominion over Egypt. However this might be, the old viceroy was active in raising troops,

drilling the navy, and preparing for decisive war. The five powers were, however, so long over their work, that all the world grew tired—and especially Turkey, the party most interested. The Turks began to think that they could come to an understanding with the pacha, if they were let alone; and, as the pacha had repeatedly declared that the prime-minister at the Porte, Khosrou Pacha, was the mischief-maker who prevented an accommodation, the Turks deposed Khosrou Pacha in June 1840. The fleet was not, however, rendered up by the time four of the five powers—France being omitted—signed a convention, on the 15th of July. The pacha delayed about accepting the terms offered. The sultan grew angry, and declared him deposed; and then, very naturally, the pacha concluded that all was over, and prepared for the worst. Then the British vessels in the Levant blockaded Alexandria and the Syrian ports; and in September, they bombarded Beirout. The Egyptians lost ground everywhere; and in November, Acre fell before the attacks of the allied squadrons. Jerusalem returned to its allegiance to the Porte; and the Egyptians had no other hope than that of getting back to the Nile, with a remnant of their force. When assured that he would be secured in the viceroyalty of Egypt, if he delivered up the Turkish fleet and evacuated Syria, Mohammed Ali did so; and in return, received the firman which gave the dominion of Egypt to himself and his heirs.

Some weeks afterwards, however, the Porte sought to impose the disagreeable condition that the sultan should choose among the heirs, at the time of the death of any viceroy, the one he should prefer. The five powers protected the pacha from this encroachment, and his affairs were at last considered settled. From that time to the day of his death, he was wont to taunt European travellers with the state of Syria, and ask them if they did not wish it back in his hands. And it was quite true that, under his rule, the roads were as safe for travellers as he had made his great highway of the Nile; while in Syria there was nothing that could be called government, and the roads were infested with marauders. The Christians of the Lebanon would not settle under Turkish rule. Some

heavy taxes and the conscription were gone; but now there was no security for life and property. The most curious circumstance is that different tribes of Christians in the Lebanon, who had for some time been at war with each other, were believed by the European officers stationed in Syria to be fighting out the quarrels which had risen up between England, France, and Russia, in the course of their conference on eastern affairs—the Maronites being supposed to be in the interest of France, the Druses of England, and the Greek Christians of Russia. A charge had before been brought against the British government of raising the tribes of the Lebanon against the pacha's rule—a charge emphatically denied by Lord Palmerston; and now, in 1841, the jealousies between the French and English in Syria and Egypt were becoming as absurdly bitter as such jealousies are when indulged in so far from home, and amidst the *ennui* of a foreign station.

Before entering upon the controversies which arose among the five powers, we must point out to notice the remarkable self-command of the pacha in opposing no difficulty to the passage of the English through Egypt, *en route* for India. The injury to Great Britain would have been enormous, if this route had been closed, and she had been forced back upon her old track by the Cape. However certain it might be that Mohammed Ali would eventually have suffered by any vindictive use of his power over this passage to India, it must be regarded as a proof of a wisdom and self-command astonishing in a man of his origin and circumstances, that he never spoke a word nor lifted a finger in obstruction, but allowed the English to pass to the Red Sea as freely as if no mortal controversy were pending.

Towards the end of 1840, a leading journal at Paris is found saying: 'We have confided for ten years in the alliance of England; we confide in it no more. We stand alone, and alone are prepared to maintain, if need be, the balance of power, and independence of Europe. Paris, without defence, involves the safety of the whole country; Paris, fortified, will prove its bulwark.' Here was the subject of the fortifications revived. The occasion, or the pretext, for resuming the works was the expectation of

war with England; and the occasion, or the pretext, for expecting a war with England was the difference that had arisen about the eastern question. France believed that the safety of Turkey would be best secured by putting Syria under the rule of the pacha, and that the pacha would prove quiet and trustworthy when once settled in his guaranteed dominion. The other four powers believed that the ambition of the pacha would keep him always restless, and that if he was not now kept in bounds, there might be no end to the disturbance he might cause, and the incursions he would make. Meanwhile, time pressed. The risings in the Lebanon stimulated the members of the convention. If France could not come over to their view, neither could they wait; and thus it was that the treaty of July 15 was signed by four powers, to the exclusion of France. France was jealous, and remonstrated through her minister, M. Guizot; and next, she became quick-sighted to see 'concealed menaces' in the declaration of the convention for the pacification of the Levant. She next saw, in imagination, the combined forces of the four powers—or at least the armies of England—marching into France; and hence the renewed cry for the fortification of Paris. In October, the French really believed war with England to be inevitable. M. Thiers, the prime-minister of France, had instructed M. Guizot to say that France would consider it a cause of war if Mohammed Ali should be driven from Egypt as British and Turkish cannon were driving him out of Syria; and just after, the young sultan committed that foolish act of haste—declaring the deposition of Mohammed Ali. When the news reached France, the politicians and journalists of France declared that a true *casus belli* had now occurred. It was not so; for England could and did immediately prove that she was resolved to secure to the pacha the dominion of Egypt; but the war-spirit did not decline in France, in consequence of this or of any other explanation that could be afforded. The king was known to be as earnestly in favour of peace as his minister, M. Thiers, was disposed for war. Men were speculating on which would prevail, when occasion arrived for deciding the matter for the moment. The king and his minister could not agree

about the speech to be delivered at the opening of the chambers. The minister desired to announce a vast new levy of troops; the king would not hear of it, and the minister resigned, with all his colleagues. In Queen Victoria's speech at the end of the preceding session, France had not been mentioned at all, though a notification had been given of the convention for the pacification of the Levant; and the French had complained bitterly of this as a slight. In the speech of the King of the French, no such slight was offered in return; for the mention of the four powers was serious enough. Amidst the deep silence of a listening auditory, as numerous as the chambers could contain, the king announced that the convention and its declaration imposed grave duties on him; that he prized the dignity of France as much as its tranquillity; that the reasons for the extraordinary credits which had been opened would be readily understood; and that he hoped, after all, that peace would be preserved.

There was no reason, indeed, why it should not. The affairs of the east were soon considered settled: 'it takes two to make a quarrel;' and none of the four powers had any present cause of war against France. If there was to be a war, France must begin. She did not begin; and all the world knew that a warlike ministry had been dismissed for a pacific one. In a little while, the chances of peace were further improved by Lord Aberdeen's entrance upon the foreign office in London, in the place of Lord Palmerston. Rightly or wrongly, Lord Palmerston was supposed to have an extraordinary talent for creating uncomfortable feelings in foreign allies, and for bringing on awkward and critical events. He was regarded as a busy, clever, imperious man, very trying to have to do with; while Lord Aberdeen was found to be the high-bred gentleman of the diplomatic world—liberal, quiet, not apt to interfere, but frank when actually engaged in affairs, as watchful as inoffensive, and, without supineness, disposed to put a good construction on the acts of allies, and to make allowance for the mere harmless irritability of weak and harassed rulers of any country less happy than our own. It was well that the ministers on both sides of the Channel were, in 1841, men of peace; for the

war-party in France, which was noisy beyond all proportion to its numbers, and which had actually obtained possession of too much of the journalism of the time, was insane enough to laud a speech of a turbulent deputy, in favour of an alliance with Russia against England, and to raise this into a temporary popular demand. If such a thing could have been, the war of opinion would have presented a curious aspect indeed. Meantime, money for fortifications was voted—the wall and the detached forts were to be carried on together and with vigour—and the ministers procured for the government the right of constructing the works in any way it pleased; a privilege against which M. Odillon Barrot protested in a manner which now appears very significant—lest those fortifications should hereafter be used to overawe and injure the people of Paris. It was on the 1st of April that the final vote was taken.

At the end of the year a treaty was signed which occasioned new trouble hereafter. By this treaty, signed in London on the 20th of December, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia agreed with England to adopt her laws in regard to the slave-trade. Hence arose the subsequent difficulties and disputes about the right of search. As the slave-trade was declared to be piracy, and those who carried it on to be guilty of felony, it naturally followed that these five powers conceded to each other the right of searching all vessels carrying their respective flags, which were under suspicion of having slaves on board. The vigilant war-party immediately declared an apprehension that the independence of the French flag might suffer; and they actually carried in the Chamber of Deputies an admonitory resolution, in favour of which the whole chamber voted, except the five ministers who sat there. The fact was, some difficulties had occurred with American vessels on the high seas, and some consequent dispute with the United States government about the right of search; and some mistakes in practice had been made, owing, as the French ministers emphatically declared, not to the treaty of 1841, or any other treaty, but to instructions to cruisers, issued by Lord Palmerston; and these things suggested to the war-party the cry about the honour of the French flag.

The debates about this question in the French chambers, on occasion of the address, in the session of 1842, merged into discussion of the value of the English alliance; when the ministers, Guizot and Soult especially, spoke so manfully in the cause of peace, reasonableness, and the English alliance, that the opposition interrupted them with cries that theirs were English speeches. Two particulars are memorable, in regard to the debate. It was declared, without contradiction, that all practical annoyance under the provision for search had occurred during Lord Palmerston's term of office; and that, since Lord Aberdeen succeeded him, there had been none. And M. Guizot avowed that the chances of peace were improving every day; that a more just feeling towards England was beginning to prevail; and that the moderation and patience of the cabinet of London, as well as that of Paris, was constantly imparting solidity to the relations of the two countries. And yet, this was at a time when the warfare of the press was the most violent. The French journals were emulated in their spirit of animosity and their power of provoking by a London paper, the *Morning Chronicle;* whose tone was resented by the English public as a disgrace in which the national character ought not to be implicated. The general impression, at home and in France, was that the war articles in the *Morning Chronicle* were Lord Palmerston's. Whether they were his or another's, they were as mischievous as they were otherwise indefensible.

In the sessions of 1843 and 1844, the French legislators had resolved that the commerce of the country should be replaced under the sole surveillance of the national flag: in 1845, M. Guizot avowed that the provisions of the treaty against the slave-trade had lost much of their force, and tended to impair the amity of the two nations; and that he hoped that the desired end might yet be reached by means perfectly safe. In truth, the right-of-search question was by this time put out of sight by new quarrels of so fierce a character, that the king declared, in his speech before the chambers, that the good understanding of his government with England had at one time appeared in imminent danger of fatal interruption.

And yet, events had happened which seemed almost

inevitably to preclude hostile feelings, and the superficial irritability of minds not sufficiently occupied. The interest of our queen and of every member of her government, and of every good heart everywhere, was engaged on behalf of the unhappy King of the French and of his family, by an event which occurred in July 1842. The Duke of Orleans, the heir of the French throne, was thrown out of a carriage and killed. The deep grief of the aged father and of the fond mother was respected throughout Europe; and all hard thoughts must have been dismissed during the mournful period when the question of the regency was in course of settlement. The Duke de Nemours, the next brother of the Duke of Orleans, was to be regent during the minority of the Count de Paris. This settled, the king prosecuted other plans for the security of the throne from which his family was so soon to pass. In 1843, two more of his children married; the Princess Clementine being united to Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg, and the Duke de Joinville to a Brazilian princess, sister of the Emperor of the Brazils and of the Queen of Portugal. In September of the same year, Queen Victoria and her husband visited the King and Queen of the French at their country-seat, the Chateau d'Eu; and the warmth of their demonstrations of friendship, and the fervour with which the people cheered our young sovereign wherever she appeared, seemed to indicate that the war-spirit had either never been widely prevalent or had died out. The visit was returned in the autumn of the next year, when Louis Philippe was received with a welcome as hearty as his people had offered to our queen. The king lost no opportunity of saying—and it was as late as the 13th of October when he finally spoke the words with emphasis—that the aim and object of his policy had ever been a cordial amity with Great Britain; yet, in the royal speech of the 26th of December, the king admitted that difficulties which might have become of the most serious importance had risen up between the British government and his own. Discussions had been entered into which appeared to endanger the relations of the two states. These were gentle words indicating a perilous quarrel.

The island once called Otaheite, and thus so well known

to the readers of Cook's voyages, and now called Tahiti, had for some years been a British missionary station; and the queen of the island, named Pomare, had been a religious pupil of our missionaries there. In September 1842, Queen Pomare placed her dominions under the protection of France, by a treaty dated on the 9th of that month. Her subjects were not pleased. Some said she had been coerced to do the deed, through fear of the French admiral, Dupetit Thouars, who hovered about her dominions. However this might be, the natives were vexed, and showed hostility to the French; and the French naturally and immediately concluded that English intrigue was at the bottom of the discontent. The admiral appeared off the island in November 1843, and required Queen Pomare to hoist the French flag over her own, or instead of it; and, on her refusal to do so, he landed troops, hauled down her flag, and made proclamation that the island belonged to France. Of the indefensible character of this act there can be no doubt; and the French government lost no time in disowning it. There was, however, a party in the chamber, as well as outside, who, in the heat of animosity against England, declared that French honour would be wounded by the removal of the national flag set up by the admiral; while others alluded to the utility of having a piece of French territory in that part of the world. In the debate brought on by this party, M. Guizot defended the conduct of Queen Pomare, declared that of England to be blameless and pacific, and severely censured the French admiral. When the English ministers were questioned in parliament about the French treaty with Pomare, they had always said that they had nothing to object to it; that perfect religious liberty was assured by the treaty, and that the arrangement might probably be for the benefit of the inhabitants of the whole group of islands. Lord Aberdeen had obtained from Paris assurances that the British missionaries would meet with all possible protection and encouragement. When the news of the aggression of the French admiral arrived, there was hardly time for any speculation before the disavowal of the French government was communicated. But, on the 29th of July 1844, news was received which brought out stronger language from

Sir R. Peel and Lord Aberdeen than they had often used in parliament.

A missionary, named Pritchard, had become British consul at Tahiti, some time before the arrival of Admiral Dupetit Thouars. When Queen Pomare was deposed, Mr. Pritchard resigned his office; but there had not yet been time for his resignation to be accepted, and he acted as consul till a reply arrived from England. He was supposed by the French to have fostered the discontents of the natives; and he was outraged accordingly by the leading commanders on the station. A French sentinel having been attacked and disarmed by the natives on the night of the 2nd of March, Mr. Pritchard was seized 'in reprisal,' imprisoned, and released only on condition of his leaving the Pacific. He was carried away, without having seen his family, and reached England by way of Valparaiso. The British ministers declared in parliament that the account was scarcely credible—so impossible did it seem that such an outrage should have been offered under the circumstances; but the reply of the French government to the remonstrances of England would soon arrive, when, no doubt, it would appear that the French king and his ministers would be as eager to disavow this act as that of dethroning the Queen of Tahiti. After some little delay, the ministers announced, on the last day of the session, September 5, that the affair was satisfactorily settled—the French government being willing to make pecuniary recompense to Mr. Pritchard for the wrongs he had suffered. It would have been well if all had followed the lead of Sir R. Peel in declining to discuss the merits or demerits of Mr. Pritchard. Whatever his conduct might have been, whether wise or foolish, peaceable or irritating, the only question was whether he, as a British subject, had been outraged. He had; and reparation was made. But there were citizens in England and France who tried to make a cause of quarrel out of the demeanour of the man; with regard to which there could be no impartial evidence, and which had nothing to do with the affair. And again, the persons who thought France would be dishonoured by the removal of a flag which should never have been set up, were very capable of saying that French honour would

suffer by making reparation to a man who was now doubly disliked because he had been injured. Thus, the state of feeling during the latter months of 1844 was such as to warrant the expressions of the king's speech in December.

Already other storm-clouds were showing themselves on the horizon. Ever since the accession of the young Queen Isabella, there had been a rivalship between French and English influence in Spain. The regent Christina was a relation of the Orleans family, and some jealousy was excited by their friendly manners towards her. When she abdicated the regency in the autumn of 1840, leaving her daughter in the care of Espartero, she fled into France, repairing first to Marseille, as if on her way to Naples, but presently turning her face towards Paris, after receiving letters thence. She was met by the king himself outside the city, and received with military honours; and almost every newspaper in Europe detailed the particulars of a reception which was supposed to signify so much; and in the French chambers the government was called to account for permitting a course of action which would throw Spain into the arms of England. M. Guizot replied that France would faithfully support, if necessary, the throne of Isabella II., but would have nothing to do with the intestinal quarrels of Spain, and would receive any refugees in the way she thought proper. It was from Paris that Queen Christina wrote, in the ensuing summer, to claim the guardianship of her children, when the cortes were in the act of appointing guardians. She had said, in a manifesto from Marseille: 'I have laid down my sceptre, and given up my daughters;' and the after-thought by which she revoked these words was believed everywhere to be a suggestion of King Louis Philippe's. That after-thought was the cause of various risings in Spain. The Madrid insurrection terrified the poor children almost to death. They were on their knees in the innermost chamber of the palace while it was besieged by night, and nothing but the bravery of the halberdiers prevented the royal children from being seized. The insurgents used the name of Christina; she at first denied their right to do so, and then prevaricated to a degree which induced a general belief that she was employing her position at Paris to

overthrow the existing regency of Spain—a belief which, of course, set the English government closely on the watch.

In 1843, the regent Espartero and his party fell into adversity, amidst the changing fortunes of civil war. Espartero and his family escaped to England, where their welcome was cordial. The lord-mayor and corporation of London invited the regent to a public dinner at the Mansion-House. The King of the French did not appear to resent this. In his speech at the close of the year, he expressed his deep interest in the young Queen of Spain, on occasion of her having been declared of age while yet only thirteen years old; expressed hope that Spain would be in a more tranquil condition henceforward; and avowed that this hope was much strengthened by the perfect understanding which subsisted between the Queen of England and himself.

In January 1844, M. Guizot made disclosures of great importance in regard to the relations between France and England. After showing that, during a recent visit of the Duke de Bordeaux to London, under the name of the Comte de Chambord, no manifestations had been made in the least unfriendly to the existing government of France, he turned to the subject of Spain. He avowed that an honest and friendly appeal had been made to the English government, which had been responded to in a manner no less honest and friendly—an appeal as to whether there was really any occasion for the rivalship of the two interests on the soil of Spain; whether there was any substantial ground for such rivalship; whether it was not in truth a struggle kept up merely as a matter of custom and tradition. This being admitted, an agreement had ensued that all considerations should henceforth give way before the great object of securing the tranquillisation and prosperity of Spain. The two cabinets had gone further still in their discussions and agreements. They had treated of the marriage of Isabella II.; and England had consented that no prince whose connection with the Spanish throne could be injurious to France should be permitted to marry the young queen.

The first mention we meet with of the marriage of Isabella II. is in 1843, in the form of a disclaimer by the

government which drove out Espartero, of any intention of carrying the queen towards the Portuguese frontier, as had been reported, for the sake of marrying her to a prince of the family of Saxe-Coburg-Cohary, then on a visit to Lisbon. From the time of M. Guizot's speech of January 1844, the queen's marriage was the prominent point of all discussions on Spain. In March, Christina returned to Spain, and was met by her daughters on the road to Madrid. On the 23rd, they all entered Madrid in state. A vulture had hovered over the head of Espartero, it was said, when he last quitted it. Now, when Christina was re-entering it, a dove flew into the carriage, and was taken to her bosom by the little queen. Subsequent events sadly discredited the omen. In October, when a bill for retrenching the chief safeguards and most liberal provisions of the constitution was brought forward, a clause was found in it which authorised the queen to marry without the consent of the cortes; and at the same time, rumours went forth, assuming to be from authority, that it had been settled among the royal family of Spain, that the queen should marry the Prince of Asturias, the son of Don Carlos. At the same time, again—on the 13th of October—Christina married the man whose mistress she had been for seven years, and by whom she had several children. Her marriage now involved questions, both political and pecuniary, of great consequence; questions as to the date at which, by this connection, she had forfeited her office of regent, and her annual allowance from the state, and her title of queen-mother. The money and the title were now secured to her by special grants and decrees. But the question remained how the consent of the pope to this marriage had been obtained; and whether, in fact, it had been obtained at all. While all this was discussed, the new ministers were frightened into altering their bill so far as to continue the exclusion of the family of Don Carlos from connection with the throne of Spain; but this act was again neutralised by what the pope had done. It came out that he had permitted the marriage of Christina on certain conditions—one of which was that all laws and decrees should be annulled which excluded the family of Don Carlos; and

another, that Queen Isabella should marry the Prince of Asturias. In six months more, Don Carlos had resigned all claims to the crown, in favour of his son. But this had no effect in forwarding any views as to the marriage of the prince with the queen; for, before the end of the year, all the world had heard that negotiations were proceeding for a marriage of the queen with the Prince de Trappani, brother to the King of Naples and Christina, and therefore uncle to the queen. But it soon appeared that nobody desired this marriage. The young girl herself disliked the prince; her mother opposed his pretensions; and there was no strong feeling abroad in the nation on his behalf. It was conjectured that the queen would herself have chosen her cousin, Don Enrique, the second son of Don Francisco de Paula—a spirited young naval officer; but, when the prime-minister, General Narvaez, was questioned in the cortes, in January 1846, he declared that the queen appeared to have no wish to marry, and that the subject had not come under the consideration of the government at all. Other governments were more anxious; and none involved itself so deeply as that of France.

A dispatch of M. Guizot's, written in 1842, was in existence, which declared that all that France desired, in regard to the marriage of the Queen of Spain, was that she should take a husband from the House of Bourbon. The French princes might be set aside, and welcome; an ample choice would remain among the families of the King of Naples, of Don Francisco de Paula, and Don Carlos. Only let it be a Bourbon, and that was enough. In February 1846, however, we find the same minister speaking in a very different tone to Lord Aberdeen, through the French minister in London. M. Guizot now declared that, for reasons assigned, no prince of the above-mentioned families could be the choice of the parties concerned; and he intimated that any intrigue to marry the queen to a prince of the house of Saxe-Coburg would be resisted by France. There was a prince of that house whom the French government supposed that England was plotting to get married to the queen; and henceforth the relations between France and England became so unfriendly as to threaten war more

seriously than at any time since the peace. Lord Palmerston returned to the foreign office in the summer; and from that moment the controversy became painful and disgusting. It is not necessary for us to go through the disagreeable narrative, as our history closes at the date of the retirement of Lord Aberdeen. Suffice it that, blind to coming events which were soon to sweep away all the plans, and dissolve all the visions, of ambition, the French king and his ministers made a bold push to place one of their own princes in close proximity to the Spanish throne, for the chance of his issue succeeding to it, while the wretched young queen was forced into a marriage with the elder brother of the Don Enrique whom she was supposed to favour. Her younger sister, aged fourteen, was married on the same day to the Duke de Montpensier, the youngest son of the King of the French. The English newspapers were furious in their wrath, as well as strong in their indignation, at the part acted by France. The fear was lest the crowns of France and Spain should ever be found on the same head. But this could not happen by any chance short of the death of all the Duke de Montpensier's elder brothers and their children, together with failure of issue from the Queen of Spain. Events have since happened which solemnly rebuke so presumptuous a forecast into the future, by removing the young bridegroom's family from the throne of France. The fury of dissension which prevailed during the controversy looks now childish enough. The true cause for regret is the paltering and shabbiness exhibited on the part of the French government in the conduct of the business, and the fidgetiness and heat of the British minister (Lord Palmerston) about an affair which was not worth contesting at the risk of war between the two countries to whose keeping are confided the liberties of Europe. No possible question about the future descent of the Spanish crown can be worth the discord of free states, on the verge of the outbreak of the war of opinion in Europe. It was understood that the compulsion brought to bear on the young queen by her mother, under French encouragement, was very cruel; and the marriage presently appeared before the world as an unhappy one. The two weddings

took place on the 10th of October 1846; and at the end of the month, the French king received at his palace his little daughter-in-law—the Spanish princess whom he had won into his family at the expense of the friendship of the queen and people of England. 'Men say,' declared a newspaper of that date, 'that Louis Philippe has sown the wind: time will show whether he or his successor will reap the revolutionary whirlwind.'

During the period before us, changes had taken place among the royal races of France, while the people were carried on by the action of the government, slowly but surely, towards that revolutionary struggle which has since abased some of them, and exalted another, and created some new hope in a third party. The Duke d'Angoulême, who had for a large portion of his life expected to reign over France, died in 1844, and left his nephew, the Duke de Bordeaux, the sole representative of the claims of the elder Bourbons. The prince who had before troubled France with unsupported pretensions to the throne, as nephew of the emperor—Prince Louis Napoleon—made a descent on Boulogne in August 1840, even more absurd than the Strasburg attempt; and received, as his retribution for his contemptible invasion of a kingdom, an imprisonment in the fortress of Ham, whence he escaped, after a seclusion of six years, in the dress of a workman. Though no wisdom had thus far marked his proceedings, it may finally be proved of some importance to France that his life was not taken on an occasion which would have justified the sentence in the eyes of the world. In the same year, the remains of his uncle, the emperor, were brought from St. Helena, under the care of one of the Orleans princes, and solemnly buried in the Hotêl des Invalides, in the presence of all Paris—the Orleans family paying all the honours personally.

The African conquests of France still yielded more trouble and cost than glory or gain; and to the dark side of the account was now to be added shame, deep and ineffaceable. The native Arabs and Moors were no nearer being conquered than ever; and the noble defender of his race and religion, the Emir Abd-el-Kader, a hero worthy of any country and any age, was still the invincible foe of

the invaders. In the belief that he was countenanced by the Emperor of Morocco, the French made war upon that potentate, and the Prince de Joinville bombarded Tangier on the 6th of August 1844, in spite of the preventive efforts of Mr. Hay, the British chargé d'affaires in that place. No results of importance ensued; for which various causes were assigned by French writers; but all agreed that England interfered to promote peace, on terms as favourable to Morocco as could be obtained. Abd-el-Kader meantime was as restless as ever, incessantly harassing the French force, without receiving any injury in return. Perhaps the exasperation of the French commanders in Algeria from this cause might be the influence which so turned the brain of one of them as to induce him to stain the glory of the French arms by an act of atrocity unequalled in modern times. There was a tribe of Kabyle Arabs which had never been conquered, because they retired upon a rocky district perforated with caverns. Colonel Pelissier roasted and suffocated this tribe in their retreat by kindling fires at the entrance. When escape was first offered them, on condition of surrender, they refused; and such of the women as attempted to fly were shot by their husbands, who considered it a case of martyrdom for religion. They, and their families, and their cattle—500 human beings found dead, and more who died when taken out—were roasted or suffocated. But Europe found a voice on their behalf. A cry of reprobation ran over all civilised countries. In France, however, the chronicler of the times offers only a very brief comment. 'Such,' he says, 'are the necessary consequences of a war incessantly rekindled by fanaticism.'

In seeking to determine the position held by France in regard to the conflict now beginning between the Eastern despotic and the Western self-governing principle, it is indispensable to consider the view propounded by the foreign minister of France in the critical period of 1842. However M. Guizot may have afterwards stooped from his declared position, and lost sight of a broad theory of European policy in a low pursuit of selfish and fantastical national ambition, at the bidding of a man unworthy to be obeyed by such a one as he, he spoke in 1842 from his

own mind and heart—and his view ought to remain on record. France had come out of the isolation in which she stood at the time of the Brunow Convention, and was again placed in friendly relations with the other four powers, when, on the 19th of January 1842, M. Guizot said in the Chamber of Deputies: 'Some are alarmed at the words "European concert." But do those words mean that the Holy Alliance is revived? No. That which is called European concert is simply the spirit of peace among the great powers. It is the manifestation of that accordant mind which, in case of any critical event occurring, would endeavour to understand and resolve the great political question, before having recourse to the chances of war. It is to this policy that, for more than twenty years, Europe has been indebted for peace. It is to this policy that Greece and Belgium owe their existence. Never before were mighty events accomplished so pacifically, and conducted so regularly, by negotiation alone, under the influence of European good sense. There are but three political systems possible for any country—alliance, isolation, or independence in the midst of good understanding. For intimate alliances, the time is passed. As for the policy of isolation, it is a transitory policy which is connected with a position more or less critical and revolutionary. It is necessarily adopted on occasion, but should never be reduced into a system. Besides, an intimate alliance between France and England involves the inconvenience of cementing the alliance between the three great continental powers. The policy of isolation involves the yet greater inconvenience of inducing the alliance of the four great powers. There remains then the policy of independence in the midst of amity—and this is the policy upon which France has entered.'

In another view, France left herself free to form alliances hereafter as future events might indicate.

The relations of England with the United States were as precarious as those with France, during this period. First, there was a dispute arising out of the Canadian troubles of 1837. A steam-boat, the *Caroline*, belonging to an American owner, had conveyed arms and stores to a party of Canadian insurgents on Navy Island. Some

loyalists seized the vessel, and sent her down the Falls of Niagara; and, in the scuffle, an American citizen was killed. One M'Leod, a British subject, was arrested when transacting business in the state of New York, charged with participation in the destruction of the *Caroline*, and in the murder of Durfee, the slain man. The British minister protested against the process, declaring the act to have been done in obedience to the colonial authorities, and therefore to be a subject for explanation between the two governments, and not for the trial of an individual in the courts of law. The British government did fully assume the responsibility of the act of destroying the *Caroline;* but not for this would the American authorities liberate M'Leod. A popular assemblage overawed the magistrates when they were about to release him on bail; and this complicated the affair perilously. So did the report of a committee of congress on the question, which was little short of a declaration of war; but it was presently understood that the report had had the concurrence of a bare majority in committee. The next difficulty was that the state of New York claimed to try the prisoner for offences committed against the state citizens, instead of those of the union; and thus, the question, as between the two governments, was evaded. M'Leod was tried at Utica, in the state of New York. Fortunately, there was unquestionable evidence of M'Leod's absence from the scene of the destruction of the *Caroline*. The plea of an *alibi* was too strong to be withstood; the jury returned a verdict of acquittal, and the danger was over for the time. Some foolish Canadians, however, did what they could to embroil us afresh. They made an incursion into the United States territory, and seized a Colonel Grogan, whom they accused of incendiary outrage; but the Canadian authorities ordered the instant discharge of Colonel Grogan, and no more was heard of the matter. It remained a subject of serious uneasiness to both governments, however, that outrages were perpetually taking place on the frontier. The Canadian loyalists were insulting and violent; the American adventurers who infested the boundary delighted in raids and skirmishes, and the federal government had not power to restrain

them—owing to certain limitations of its functions, and a partition of power between itself and the states along the frontier. Every one was aware that, under the difficulties of the case, much would depend on the character and temper of the president of the republic. General Harrison entered upon the office in March of this year, 1841; but, before any clear anticipation could be formed of his temper and policy, he died—only four weeks after his entrance upon office. By the regulation provided for such a possible case, he was succeeded in his function by the vice-president, Mr. Tyler; and it remained to be seen how the affairs of the States would go on under the rule—for the first time—of a president who had not been elected to that office by the people.

The right-of-search question was becoming a cause of controversy before the M'Leod affair was settled; and now the controversy was fast growing into a quarrel. The American minister in London maintained that the right existed only under certain treaties; and that countries which, like the United States, had refused participation in such treaties, could not permit their vessels to be searched for evidence of traffic in slaves, or on any other pretence. Lord Palmerston had, before going out of office, admitted this, but shown that the difficulty arose from slavers hoisting, unauthorised, any flag that might suit their purpose best. All that was claimed was—not a right to search American merchantmen, but merely to examine their ships' papers, to ascertain whether they really were American vessels. Without this there could be no security against the slave-traffic of the world being carried on under the flags of those countries which did not participate in the treaties. It will be seen what a wide field of international law was extended for argumentation when Lord Aberdeen came into office. In the following December, Lord Aberdeen communicated to the American minister the nature of the instructions given to British cruisers; and the frank and temperate explanations of the two ministers led to happy results. The president said of them in a message to the Representatives: 'These declarations may well lead us to doubt whether the apparent difference between the two governments is not rather one of definition than of

principle.' And again: 'It seems obvious to remark, that a right which is only to be exercised under such restrictions and precautions, and risk, in case of any assignable damage to be followed by the consequences of a trespass, can scarcely be considered anything more than a privilege asked for, and either conceded or withheld on the usual principles of international comity.' The president's lead was followed by congress. Congress agreed that the honour of the American flag 'demanded that it should not be used by others to cover an iniquitous traffic;' and, like the president, congress 'chose to make a practical settlement of the question.' And thus, without any concession being made on the side of Great Britain, but only by means of her object becoming better understood, it was settled that, on any fair occasion of suspicion whether the United States flag was shown rightfully or as a pretence, she might require the production of the ship's papers, under the liability of making reparation for damage or delay, if the vessel should be found to be really American. The Americans also agreed to keep a squadron off the coast of Africa, to guard against abuse of the American flag. And thus, in the spring of 1843, was the right-of-search question settled with the United States.

Some complications had occurred in the course of the controversy which threatened to prevent its amicable adjustment. A Virginian brig, called the *Creole*, was on its way to New Orleans in October 1841, when some slaves, who formed part of the cargo, obtained possession of the ship, wounded the captain and some of the crew, killed a passenger who was the owner of some of their number, and then carried the vessel to Nassau, in New Providence, one of the West India Islands. On the requisition of the American consul, the magistrates of Nassau detained and imprisoned nineteen negroes who were charged with participation in the mutiny and murder. The rest, 114 in number, against whom there was no charge, were allowed to go where they would, under the British law that every slave becomes free on touching British soil. The governor of the Bahamas refused to detain them, and also to forward the nineteen to America till he received directions from home. The law-officers and law-peers of England gave a

unanimous opinion that there was no law of the empire under which the persons charged could be tried or even detained; and the governor of Nassau was therefore instructed to release the nineteen negroes, unless there was any peculiar colonial law under which they could be tried. The wrath of some of the slave-states was loud, and there was talk of bloody consequences; but our newspapers said throughout, 'We shall not need to go to war about the *Creole*;' and so it proved. The American requisition was withdrawn, and the slaveholders grew tired, at last, of charging Great Britain with abetting piracy and murder.

There was much ruffling of temper on other subjects. A great number of Americans, who did not understand our politics, 'sympathised' with the Irish repealers, sent money, promised men, and avowed themselves ready to abet treason on behalf of Ireland to any extent. On the other hand, a great number of Englishmen, who did not understand American affairs, grossly insulted the whole American nation, on account of the delinquency of a very small number in the semi-barbarous states, about their state finances. Three of these semi-barbarous states repudiated their public debts; and Pennsylvania and one more delayed the payment of their dividends. Pennsylvania never repudiated, though, following a mistake of Sydney Smith's, people in London supposed and said that she did. Such persons knew nothing of the peculiarities of the half-German population of Pennsylvania, ignorant and slow; and forgot the unequalled pressure and perplexity she had been subjected to by the action of President Jackson on the banks, and the consequent extinction of her currency for a time. They knew nothing of the miseries of the inhabitants, when reduced to a state of barter; and in this condition of ignorance they charged her with a 'repudiation' which her subsequent payments have shown her not to have contemplated. If it is said that people in London could not be expected to know these things, the answer is plain: that they should not invest their money in foreign funds without understanding the circumstances of the case; nor accept extraordinary interest for their investment without being prepared for a corresponding risk. The New-England States, which head the union, have ever pre-

served an unblemished honour; and so have most of the rest. The few which have not were unfit to be trusted, and might have been known to be so by any one who understood what the border-states are, with the institution of slavery on the one hand, and the wilds of the Mississippi on the other; and within them a population largely composed of persons who prefer a semi-barbarous to a highly civilised state of society. But, in the wrath of British claimants on certain state-funds at the failure of their dividends, the thirty states and the whole American nation were mixed up together under a charge of cool knavery; and the temper of both nations was anything but ameliorated. Some men who ought to have known better were for petitioning congress about an affair of state-debts, with which congress had no more concern than the parliament of any other country; and it could not be very soothing to the temper of the Americans to find that our clergymen, members of parliament, and merchants did not take the trouble to learn even the outlines of the American constitution.

Then, in 1843 and 1844, public sentiment in England was awake and alive on the subject which was dividing the American nation—the annexation of Texas, followed by the invasion of Mexico. Dr. Channing was revered in England; his words went far and sank deep; and his reprobation of the annexation of Texas obtained a response from end to end of Great Britain. The noblest part of the American nation rejoiced in our sympathy, and in our perception that the action of their country upon Texas and Mexico was purely for the extension of slavery; a safeguard for the institution now so shaken towards the north; and a new field for its support, in preparation for its abolition in the states which it had exhausted and impoverished. But the noble are always the few; and every expression of censure or disgust at the game that was playing against the interests of humanity kindled wrath among the majority in the States, who were eager for the excitement of war, and the glory of territorial aggrandisement.

While such was the temper of the two peoples towards each other, a question of more difficulty and more im-

portance than any yet discussed had arisen between the two governments. It has been noticed before how surely trouble springs up, sooner or later, from the ignorance of geography which prevails when the boundaries of new countries are assigned. The frontier-line between the state of Maine and Canada could not be agreed upon by the British and the Americans, when the region became settled. It was a matter of high importance to the residents of the debated ground whether they lived under British or American government and laws; and in the existing temper of the two nations, it appeared too probable that not only skirmishes would take place along the frontier, but that a national war might ensue. Sober people in England, now quieted and made reasonable by a quarter of a century of peace, could hardly conceive of such a thing as a national war for such a cause; but it appears that the statesmen on both sides the Atlantic really apprehended such an issue. In 1839, Lord Palmerston had sent out commissioners to explore the line claimed by the British, and see whether it accorded with the features of the country; and, after these commissioners had reported, two more were sent out to make a similar investigation into the line claimed by the Americans. Their report, in 1841, was adverse to the American claim. Arbitration had before been tried, and had failed. The King of the Netherlands had pronounced on two points out of three, and declared the other impossible to settle. He had determined that the British were right as to which was the true river-head specified, and what the proper parallel of latitude; but as to which of two ranges of highlands was intended, there was no evidence to show. After some confusion, both parties declined the award. And thus, there was no reason to hope anything from arbitration. In this perplexity, Sir R. Peel's government chose the fittest man in Great Britain for the business, and sent him out as a special ambassador to Washington, fully empowered to settle all matters in dispute between the two governments. Lord Ashburton (late Mr. Baring), a thorough Englishman in mind and manners, was yet so connected with America by commercial and family relations as to have much sympathy with American feelings, and full knowledge of American

institutions, customs, and modes of thought. He went out in February 1842, was courteously and even joyfully received, and brought matters round presently. A treaty which settled the boundary question was signed on the 9th of August following. It was not to be supposed that everybody was satisfied. Lord Palmerston, for one, was sure to be displeased; and his prophecies of the dissatisfaction that would be felt, and the mischiefs that would arise, were very strong. But no difficulties have as yet been heard of; and the inestimable good of peace and national amity appears to have been obtained without sacrifice. The agreement gave 7-12ths of the disputed ground, and the British settlement of Madawaska, to the United States, and only 5-12ths of the ground to Britain; but it secured a better military frontier to England, and it included heights commanding the St. Lawrence which the award of the King of Holland had assigned to the Americans. The best testimony to the equality of the arrangements was the amount of discontent among American politicians being about equivalent to that declared in England. But in both countries, the vast majority were satisfied and gratified; and the chances against war appeared to be stronger than for several years past. Lord Ashburton, after having been honoured throughout every step of his travels in the United States, received the thanks of parliament on his return home.

All danger was not over, however. It has been mentioned before that in 1822 Lord Castlereagh told Mr. Rush that such was the condition of the Oregon question between England and the United States, that war could be produced by holding up a finger. Now, after the lapse of twenty years, the question was as unsettled, and almost as perilous, as ever. It may be remembered that an agreement was made in the treaty of 1818-19, that for a period of ten years the Oregon territory should be open to occupation by settlers from both countries. The period was afterwards indefinitely extended. In 1843, the American president announced that he was going to negotiate with Great Britain for the final settlement of their claims to the Oregon territory. A push was immediately made in congress to get Oregon occupied and put under military organisation,

as territory belonging to the United States; and the restless among the vivacious American nation began to form and equip caravans for the long and dreary passage to Oregon, over and beyond the Rocky Mountains. They acted as if their national existence depended on their appropriating the whole available coast of the Pacific, and as if there were no rashness in tempting a crowd of emigrants to cross a desert continent, among myriads of buffaloes and through tribes of hostile Indians, to take possession of a district whose capabilities and conveniences were little known, and which might prove to be the property of a foreign power. Such rashness and indecent haste made the question of settlement more difficult—British statesmen being disgusted, and American statesmen ashamed, without being able freely to say so. In the course of several conferences between the negotiators on each side in 1844, it was understood that the matter should be settled by compromise—by dividing the territory lying along the Columbia River. The new president, Mr. Polk, avowed his dislike to any surrender whatever of the American claim; but declared that it was too late when he entered upon office to draw back from the compromise principle—a declaration which made the majority on both sides of the Atlantic rejoice that that much was agreed upon before Mr. Polk became president. Throughout the session of 1845, the debates in congress on the subject of Oregon were so conducted as apparently to impair grievously the chances of peace. But it is probable that their very violence wrought in the other direction. Statesmen, worthy of the name, on both sides were better aware what they were about than boastful and quarrelsome orators; and the more arrogance and rancour that were expressed, the more were the negotiators stimulated to find a basis of agreement.

In his message of December 1845, the American president used language of dogmatism, if not defiance, which some members of the senate declared themselves unable to agree to. In the next month, Queen Victoria said, in her speech to parliament, that she regretted the unsettled state of the Oregon question, and that no effort consistent with national honour should be wanting on her part to

bring the controversy to an early and peaceful termination. With these speeches before them, the American Houses of Congress went into debate. The debates were protracted through three months, ending on the 23rd of April, with a signal and somewhat unexpected victory of the moderate party. With a view to driving on the matter to a decision by force, the war-party had carried resolutions that notice of the cessation of a joint occupancy of Oregon should be given to Great Britain. After a conference, it was settled that the resolution about such notice should stand, being accompanied by a declaration that it was for the purpose of inducing a speedy amicable settlement of the dispute, on the ground of an equitable compromise. As soon as the news of this resolution arrived in England, Lord Aberdeen sent out a new proposal of compromise to our minister at Washington. The president submitted the proposal to the senate, who approved it by a large majority. The president then accepted the terms; and in June, the treaty was signed which settled at last the Oregon question. Vancouver's Island remained to Great Britain, and the free navigation of the Columbia; and the territory in dispute was divided in a way which appears likely to be permanently satisfactory to both parties. Mr. Webster, indeed, avows his anticipation that the combined population of Americans and British, similar in race and separated only by national distribution, will set up for themselves ere long, and form a republic on the Pacific. However that may be, they are no longer at war, or in anticipation of it. This happy act of reconciliation was one of the last to be perfected by Sir R. Peel's government, and the ultimate success of Lord Aberdeen's mild and discreet administration of our foreign affairs.

CHAPTER XIII.

India—Sikh Invasion—The Sandwich Islands—Van Diemen's Land—South Australia—New Zealand—Canada—Compensation Question—Fires at Quebec—St. John's—Hamburg—Smyrna—New York.

In the records of Indian affairs during this period we find a curious mingling of notices—the formation of companies for the construction and management of railways, which are to encourage commerce and extend peace over the whole of those vast regions; and hints that the British may soon be compelled to interfere in the Punjaub, from the excesses that were perpetrated there against one after another of the rulers who succeeded Runjeet Singh. In 1845, we find the India Company addressing the governor-general, Sir Henry Hardinge, on the subject of railways, in the evident anticipation that the peninsula may in time be intersected with them, so as completely to change its financial condition, and perhaps the character of its population; and in the same year—towards its close—we see our territory invaded in the north-west, by an army of Sikhs crossing the Sutlej; whether with or without the sanction of the existing government at Lahore, was not immediately known. The governor-general was in the north-west at the time, having had reason to expect some trouble there; and it was on the 13th of December that the decisive news reached him that a Sikh army had crossed the Sutlej. On the 18th, the battle of Moodkee was fought, under Sir Hugh Gough, when the Sikhs were beaten, but not effectually discomfited. In this battle fell Sir Robert Sale, the hero of Jelalabad; a man whom the whole nation would have been delighted to see enjoying his old age in England, after his long toils and sufferings in the East. Here, however, his left thigh was shattered by a ball, and he soon died of the wound. The next battle, that of Ferozshah, was rendered remarkable by the circumstance of the governor-general offering his services

to Sir Hugh Gough as second in command; and he actually remained in action in that capacity, conspicuously throughout the day. The foe proved more formidable than had been expected—their skill appearing to equal their hardihood. It was no easy matter to vanquish them; but after the battles on the 21st and 22nd, they were routed, and their guns captured. Our loss was heavy; and even those who believed that the Punjaub was now quieted and the Sikhs silenced for ever, felt that these results were obtained at a severe cost. But there were not a few who foresaw what has since happened—new conflicts, and the sad necessity of annexing the Punjaub to our territory, for the sake of peace, and of the safety of the inhabitants of the north-western provinces.

One more battle—that of Aliwal, fought on the 28th of January 1846—drove the Sikhs from our territory, and impelled them to take refuge in their last stronghold on the left bank of the Sutlej. From this position they were driven by the battle of Sobraon, on the 10th of February, when the governor-general was again present under Sir H. Gough. The slaughter on our side was terrible enough; but that of the Sikhs was sickening to hear of. They were drowned in shoals in the river, and shot by hundreds as they attempted to escape into their own territory. They were followed by the British army; and the governor-general undertook the arrangement of the affairs of the Punjaub. He believed that, by the establishment of a protectorate, he had avoided the evil of the annexation of the territory. But time has proved him mistaken. The Sikhs have since risen again, and have again been chastised, almost to the point of destruction; and the Punjaub is now British territory.

A part of the work of the last parliamentary session we have to record was voting thanks and welcoming honours to the heroes of the Sikh war—one of the briefest of our Indian wars, but one of the most brilliant. There was much heartiness of admiration on the occasion, but very little joy; rather, there was so much regret that it was evident that thirty years of European peace had humanised the English mind, and raised it to a point of feeling which becomes a civilised nation compelled to enter the

lists of brute conflict with a half-barbarous people. Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir Hugh Gough were raised to the peerage; and when they and other heroes of the war returned to England, the national welcome awaited them wherever they went.

In 1843, the Sandwich Islands—the Hawaiian Islands, or old Owhyhee—were ceded by their king, Kamehameha, to Great Britain, because the poor sovereign found himself embarrassed by claims of reparation for injury done to British subjects. The cession was not accepted; but our protection was promised to the islands as forming an independent state. It is amusing to find these poor people beginning at once with constitutional government. Their two Houses of parliament—the House of Nobles and House of Representatives—met on the 20th of May 1845, and the king delivered a speech, the tone of which is ludicrously like such as are delivered in London and Paris. The peculiarities of it are a provision for ascertaining whether the number of the people is increasing or diminishing; and a declaration that it is the possession of the Word of God which has introduced their people into the family of independent nations. The first vote of the Nobles was one of thanks to Great Britain, France, Belgium, and the United States, for recognising the independence of the Hawaiian kingdom. This done, 'the ministers presented their reports and estimates, and the ordinary business of the session commenced.' We have been accustomed to think that constitutional government is a gradual and late growth of civilisation—a thing impossible to impose, and of which some old European nations are not yet capable. It can hardly be supposed that the Sandwich Islanders can maintain it pure; but they will probably be happier than under the despotic rule of an irresponsible king.

The desire for representative government was spreading among our own colonies. In 1846, ten of them had made application for the boon. There had been much misgovernment; or the colonists thought so. Taxes trebled at a stroke, favouritism towards public officers, or ill-usage of them, quarrels between governors and their coadjutors, tricks with the currency, executive extrava-

gance—such grievances as these in colonies where the inhabitants now amounted to tens of thousands, made the residents desire to try whether they could not govern themselves better than they were governed by the colonial office. In Van Diemen's Land, abuses of various kinds had reached such a pass, that the prosperity of the colony had stopped; and it was sinking into debt, though the taxes had been trebled in one day; and yet there were 35,000 free colonists who were without representation, while several western colonies had a representation before their numbers had reached a sixth part of this. A new governor was sent out to Van Diemen's Land, and it was recommended that the civil officers who had resigned in despair should be restored; but it remains a disgrace to successive governments that the desire of our colonies for participation in the best privileges of the British constitution can scarcely obtain any attention. Next to Ireland, our colonies continue to be the opprobrium of our empire. In 1846, at the close of the period now under review, our colonies were forty-two, containing a population of 4,674,000. Twenty-five of the forty-two had representation; but most of these had a much smaller population than several colonies which were cruelly oppressed by the arbitrary rule of incapable governors; and the difficulty these had in making their complaints heard by the public at home, and attended to by the government, was such as to bring upon the colonial office heavy, but just, imputations of rashness and tyranny. But for the occurrence of some outrageous case now and then, some abuse too gross to be covered up, there was, and still is, little hope of the colonies being so treated as to preserve their affection for the mother-country. For whatever reason it is so—whether the business of the colonial office has outgrown its machinery, or bad traditions remain in force within it, or the frequent change of colonial ministers is fatal to consistent government, or the choice of those ministers has been eminently unfortunate—whether these or other mischiefs be the cause, it certainly appears that the misgovernment of our colonies has long been so intolerable, that we cannot expect to retain them, unless some speedy and comprehensive reform is carried out.

One flagrant case of misgovernment, whose excess was of service, was that of South Australia under Governor Gawler, whose extravagant expenditure involved the colony so deeply that it was scarcely hoped that it could ever revive. In 1841, an advance was made from the treasury at home of no less than £155,000; and the governor was desired to draw no more. He did not obey; his bills were dishonoured; he was removed from office; and his successor, Captain Grey, found that the annual expenditure of the colony was £150,000, while its revenue was only £30,000. The needful sudden reduction of such an expenditure—which Governor Grey soon brought down to £35,000—occasioned great distress in the settlement; and society had almost to be organised afresh. The treasury at home had to pay £400,000 for the relief of this unfortunate colony. Some advance towards giving a power of self-government to this colony and that of New South Wales was made in 1842, by an enactment that their legislative council should consist partly of members elected by the people; and that, under royal sanction, a general assembly, chosen by popular election, might be convened. South Australia was not a convict colony; but Sydney and Van Diemen's Land were, and they therefore afforded an unsatisfactory ground of argument about colonial government. Claims of a representative system were easily met by displays of the difficulty of popular election in a community consisting largely of criminals; and arbitrary measures are easily and fairly justified on the plea of the untrustworthy character of a large element of the local society. But there is a colony of ours, lying alone in the sea, unconnected even in idea with the transportation system, and with every pre-requisite for a perfect colonial experiment, whose fate shows something of what our colonial government is.

The New Zealand Islands have a climate and soil which point them out for occupancy by British colonists. British emigrants were willing to go; and the inhabitants of New Zealand were eager to have them. The public at home showed an unusual desire to colonise these islands; and a company was formed for the purpose, in the face of the reluctance of the government, which threw every obstacle

in the way. The main object of the company was to make trial of Mr. Wakefield's plan of self-supporting colonisation. By this plan, the proceeds of the sale of land are applied to the bringing out labour, in a regulated proportion to the land; and the land and labour are sufficiently concentrated, so as to prevent the ruinous dispersion of inhabitants, and isolation of settlements, which makes colonisation mere squatting, as to its social effects, when individuals are allowed to purchase more land than they can use, or to wander away beyond the reach of co-operation. The government adopted no steady principle about claiming the territory; and neither furnished the original colonists with a government, nor allowed them to govern themselves till they could be legislated for. The governor sent out, Governor Hobson, seemed to think it the main business of himself and his officials to thwart and humble the officers of the company; and the most flourishing of the young colonies of England was damaged in every way by his influence—in intercourse with the natives, in financial management, and in the spirits and temper of the settlers. In the summer of 1842, charges against Governor Hobson were transmitted by the colonists to the home government—charges of ruinous extravagance, of permitting his official servants to make unfair selections of land, and of applying £40,000 received for land-sales to other purposes than the prescribed one of bringing out labour. Before inquiry could be made, Governor Hobson died, having saddled this colony, meant to be self-supporting, with a debt of £68,000. Captain Fitzroy was the next governor, and, if possible, a worse than his predecessor. He found he could not keep the expenditure of the colony down to £20,000 a year, though the population was only 15,000; and he resorted to a system of *assignats*. He issued what he called 'debentures' to the amount of £15,000—promissory notes down to the value of 2*s*. Complaining that they became 'unduly depreciated,' he made them a legal tender. While thus tampering with the currency of the colony, he had seriously shaken the security of the landed property of the emigrants, by unsettling the terms of their land-purchases from the natives, after the payment had long been made; and further, he proffered a most

untimely and pernicious conciliation and sympathy to a party of the natives who had massacred nine of our countrymen in cold blood—tomahawking them after they had laid down their arms; at the same time forbearing to avenge the cutting down of the British flag at the custom-house. Captain Fitzroy was recalled; but not before such a catalogue of offences from ignorance, conceit, and ill-humour, had been recorded against him in the debates and committee of parliament, as makes it a matter of speculation on what principle colonial governors are appointed. After the New Zealand Company, which was held in universal respect, had expended £300,000 of its own capital, and £300,000 more raised on credit, it had not obtained possession of a single acre of its lands; emigrants, who had paid cash for their land in England, could not obtain access to it in the colony, from Captain Fitzroy's refusal to fulfil conditionally an agreement between the government and the company, in reliance on which the settlers had made their purchases. The parliamentary committee of inquiry reported that the settlers had a clear right, as against the crown-lands, to the fulfilment of this agreement; but they could not get their rights; and, ruined and forlorn, they were taking ship, as they could get a passage, to New South Wales, or Australia, or back to England, to begin the world again without means. Some of those who remained had their houses pulled down and their crops burned by the natives; and the governor did not speak or stir in their behalf, but gave to the aggressors, encouraged by himself, such sympathy as he had. He suppressed the volunteer force raised by the settlers for their own protection, and offered them, in compensation, fifty soldiers to protect a region of 200 miles long, and inhabited by 10,000 persons. The reserves of land made by the company for the natives were left unproductive, and nothing done of what would have been done by the company for their religious improvement and secular instruction; while the governor assumed to take their part against the company. Some of the worst acts of Captain Fitzroy were approved by the colonial office, and others were not rebuked; and it was therefore against the colonial secretary, Lord Stanley, and his office, that the complainants urged their case. 'It is, in truth,' said Mr.

C. Buller, 'the history of the war which the colonial office has carried on against the colony of New Zealand. Is this an exaggerated expression? What enemy of the British name and race could—what civilised enemy would—have brought such ruin on a British colony? . . . . A great colonial wrong is before you; and indifferent as in general you naturally are to the fortunes of colonists of whom you see nothing, now that such a matter is brought to your attention, show the colonial office that it is not wholly uncontrolled, and will not always be allowed to sport with the interests of our countrymen in the colonies.'

Not even such treatment as has been detailed could ruin settlements with such natural advantages as those of New Zealand. Governor Grey, who had already won a high character as successor to Governor Gawler, came from Adelaide to try what could be done in New Zealand. He at once repressed and protected the natives, retrenched the expenditure, vindicated the honour of the British flag, and left the settlers as free as possible, to manage their private affairs, and prosper in their own way. And thus, though the colony may not be all that it might have been long ago—all that was hoped when the first ship sailed from our shores for the new land, when a crowd of the foremost men in England gave a parting cheer to the anxious but hopeful emigrants, and when some of the emigrants themselves were from among the first men in England—it is at least a colony of irrepressible and rising fortunes. Its original peculiarity was that it represented a complete and highly civilised society, a proportion from all ranks, from the kindred of nobles and the bishop down to the hedger and ditcher. Thus is its intellectual and moral welfare secured, as well as its material prosperity. New Zealand is, after all, perhaps the most promising of British colonies.

In Canada, Lord Sydenham was succeeded by Sir Charles Bagot, who opened the second session of the united Canadian parliament on the 8th of September 1842. He did not find, as Lord Sydenham had anticipated, that everything was now so settled that affairs would run in grooves, with only a very gentle force to push them. He was obliged to make an immediate choice between two

great difficulties; and a source of disturbance was opened up during his short administration which makes our relations with Canada at this day as doubtful as they have ever been.

Two leaders who had been in opposition in Lord Sydenham's time now found themselves stronger than the government in the assembly. Mr. Baldwin, the leader of a small liberal party in what was lately Upper Canada, and Mr. Lafontaine, the leader of the French party in what had been Lower Canada, found a large majority to their hand in the assembly. The governor-general must now choose between sanctioning the preponderance of this radical party, and governing by the support of the minority in the assembly. It being now the principle of Canadian government to rule in accordance with the majority of the representatives, he did the thing thoroughly, making Baldwin and Lafontaine his ministers. He joined with them a cautious and sensible man from Lord Durham's coadjutors—Mr. Daly, whose presence in the cabinet might be hoped to act as a restraint on any political intemperance. The difficulty which would have embarrassed the administration of Sir C. Bagot, if he had remained in his office, related to compensation for losses sustained in the rebellions. A bill for compensation for losses suffered by loyalists was so altered in the assembly as to include losses suffered at the hands of the loyalists—that is, the soldiery, volunteers, and others. Mr. Baldwin proposed and carried this alteration. The sum voted was £40,000; but no means of raising it were provided. This very important amendment caused little discussion and no apprehension at the time, though it has since appeared too like the running of a mine under the new Canadian constitution which may blow it to pieces. The loyalists of Canada West wanted to have their compensation paid out of the general revenue of the union; but the now dominant party objected to this, and gave notice that claims on the same fund would be made by sufferers in Canada East. This was so alarming, that the loyalists dropped the subject for the present, and the other party had no wish to revive it—perceiving, doubtless, how its discussion must renew the conflict of races. Sir Charles Bagot's health presently

gave way. Before the end of the year, he was too ill to remain; and he died soon after his return to England.

Sir Charles T. Metcalfe succeeded him, in February 1843. The same policy was carried on, and the same ministry remained in power. The fine qualities of this excellent ruler were known through his government of Jamaica, where he had been sent by Lord Melbourne's ministry in 1839. For a few months, all appeared to go well; but in the autumn, disputes arose out of a claim made by his ministry to be consulted about appointments to office, which all agreed to be the prerogative of the crown. The ministry resigned, in consequence of the refusal of Sir C. Metcalfe to admit their right to be consulted; and the session closed hastily before its business was finished. For some time there was no ministry; and when there was, it was a moderate 'English' ministry—Mr. Daly and Mr. Draper being the leading representatives in it of the two sections of country. The French party were now in opposition for nearly four years; and now therefore was the time for settling the affair of the £40,000. The governor-general and his cabinet admitted the justice of giving compensation to sufferers of both parties; but the doing it was difficult in the extreme. Instead of charging the money for Canada West on the general revenue, they appropriated to the purpose two local funds which were paid almost entirely by the English in the western province. So far all went well. The trouble was with the other province. A commissioner was appointed to manage the business, with regard to Canada East—to manage it, everybody thought; but it soon appeared that they had power only to receive claims, and not to decide upon them. The commissioners applied to the executive to know how they were to distinguish between claims from rebels, and those proffered by persons not actually involved in the rebellion. The answer was, that none were to be excluded but those who had been convicted by law; and when one of the leaders, exiled to Bermuda under Lord Durham's ordinance, applied personally to the governor-general to know what he ought to do, the governor-general desired him to send in his account, reminding him with a smile that he had not been

convicted by law, the ordinance under which he was sent to Bermuda being declared illegal. Still no disturbance arose. But Sir Charles Metcalfe (now made Lord Metcalfe) fell ill, and after fearful sufferings, nobly borne for many months, was compelled to relinquish his government; and he returned to England at the close of 1845, not with the slightest hope of relief, but to make way for a successor adequate to the public service. Honours were showered on him on his return; and, in the midst of the anguish of disease, such a heart as his must have enjoyed the demonstrations of sympathy and respect which met him everywhere. But, as he said in one of his last replies to addresses, the grave was open at his feet; and he sank into it in the next September, mourned by all parties in Canada, and by the whole political world at home. Lord Cathcart administered the government for nearly a year, till Lord Elgin went out as governor-general, a few months after the date which closes our history.

The Lafontaine ministry was restored—the 'Daly-Draper cabinet' having fallen into a minority in the assembly, and made matters worse by an experiment of a general election. The restored ministry proceeded in the compensation matter, bringing into the assembly a bill by which compensation was to be given to all who were not formally convicted of high treason; and the charge would fall on the general revenues of Canada. Now, by far the larger part of the taxes is paid by others than the French; the French making for themselves the greater number of the commodities which others import—such as sugar, tobacco, and material for clothing. Thus the British party see that taxes paid by themselves, and not by the party claiming compensation, will go to build up the fortunes of those whom they call rebels. Unhappily, there is a wide diversity of opinion as to whether this is an imperial or a local question. Some say that it is an imperial question, because it is of the same bearing as a question of amnesty after rebellion. Others look at it as a local quarrel about a matter of finance and party ascendency. It does not lie within our bounds to discuss this controversy. It is scarcely necessary even to say that it has kindled a war of opinions in Canada which seems but too likely to revive

the war of races, and endanger the permanence of the policy cemented with the hearts' blood of a succession of devoted rulers.

In 1845, misfortunes befell the city of Quebec, by which it was reduced to nearly the size that it was when Wolfe fell before it. More than two-thirds of the city were destroyed by fire in the months of May and June. These large fires seldom leave much cause for regret to a subsequent century; as it is usually the primitive, ill-built, unwholesome part of a great city which is devoured by the flames. In this case, it was the wooden part of Quebec that was destroyed—the narrow streets between the river and the rock, where was found most that was foul and disreputable. Much else went also—churches, wharves, ship-yards, and a hospital full of sick persons, many of whom perished in the flames; and the immediate distress amidst the enormous destruction of property, and crowding of houseless thousands, was very terrible; and, when the fire of June drove them forth a second time, almost overwhelming. But the Quebec of a century hence will be all the better for the accident. Generous help was sent from far and near, and the citizens have probably already learned to look back without much regret to the great fires of 1845.

There seems to have been a fatality about fires during this period. Just a year after the second Quebec fire, the city of St. John's, Newfoundland, was almost destroyed. Scarcely a fourth part remained. The houses here were built of wood; and the stores in the warehouses were chiefly oil and blubber, and other combustible substances. A complete sweep seems to have been made of the churches, and the government and other public offices. During the summer months, the greater part of the inhabitants were living in tents, provided from the army stores.

In 1842, there had been such a fire at Hamburg that the people thought the day of judgment was come. Churches were falling like ricks in the flame. Carts were on fire in the squares, and boats on the river. Terrified horses strove to plunge into the Alster. Amidst blinding showers of ashes, those who were driven beyond their wits sank on their knees, screaming, weeping, and praying;

and hardy thieves pillaged the houses that stood open. Two thousand houses were destroyed; 30,000 persons were left homeless; and the loss of property was computed at £7,000,000. Liberal aid was sent from this country, as from others. The greater part of Smyrna was burnt down in July 1845, 4000 houses and many public buildings being destroyed. In Cuba, the richest part of the rich city of Matanzas perished in like manner; and again, in the same month, July 1845—bringing five of the greatest fires of modern times within the compass of two months—occurred the last fearful New York conflagration, in which 302 dwellings were destroyed, and above £2,000,000 of property. It seems impossible that some lessons should not be derived by the world from such spectacles as these, as to the construction of dwellings, if not as to the guardianship of such a power as fire. Meantime, it is as well to admit the purification that it brings, through however hard an experience.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Corn Question—Mr. Gladstone's Retirement—Financial Statement—Agricultural Interests—Portents—Bad Weather—The Potato Rot—The League—More Portents—Lord John Russell's Letter—Cabinet Councils—Announcement of the *Times*—Resignation of Ministers—Negotiation with Lord John Russell—Return of Sir Robert Peel to Power—Death of Lord Wharncliffe—Sir Robert Peel's Position.

At the opening of the session of 1845, there seemed to be but one troublesome controversy agitating the community. The harvest of 1844 had been good; and therefore provisions were moderate in price, trade was brisk, the operative classes were contented, the revenue was steadily rising, and even Ireland was quieter than usual. The one troublesome controversy was—as need hardly be said—about the corn-laws.

The 'landed interest' was restless and uneasy. The League was as busy as ever, and visibly growing more powerful in this season of prosperity, though it had been widely said that its influence had been wholly due to the

distress of 1840–43. It was also evident, though the truth was admitted with the utmost reluctance, that Sir R. Peel was rising yearly in the favour of the manufacturing and commercial classes, by whom he was regarded as so decided a free-trader, that everything might be hoped from him, as time opened to him opportunities for carrying out his principles, in regard to other food than meat and fish, and garden vegetables. Few, perhaps, put this anticipation into words; but there were many landowners and many farmers who let it lie in their minds, to be revolved in solitary rides and walks, and compared with what they heard among their neighbours; and there were a multitude of commercial men who, practised in discerning the course of commercial events, and of politics in connection with them, foresaw that the first pressure upon the food-market must occasion a repeal of the corn-laws, and that Sir R. Peel was more likely to effect the change than any other man, because he knew and had done most about free-trade, and because he was the only man we had who could govern under difficulties. The Whigs were pledged to a fixed duty, which the free-traders were resolved not to accept. Sir R. Peel and his government were pledged to nothing but to do what events might require. They had stood by their sliding-scale for two years, because, as they declared, they saw no reason for repealing it till it had had a full trial; but they had not said that it would prove equal to any trial—much less had they refused to withdraw it if it should be found to fail. It is a proof of the power of educational and class prejudice that they and the Whigs could so long cling to the proved mischief of agricultural protection; but the minds of the Peel ministry were now avowedly open to evidence as to whether all agricultural protection was more of an evil than a good, and whether, if an evil, it was a removable one. On this ground alone, the ministry was regarded as in any way unstable, at the commencement of the session of 1845. On this, the manufacturing and commercial classes were watchful, while the agricultural interest was suspicious. About everything else, everybody was better satisfied than usual, except the late Whig ministers, and some of their adherents.

It must now be decided whether the income-tax should be removed or continued. The royal speech, on the 4th of February, showed that the government desired its continuance. Other objects indicated in the speech were the establishment of the new Irish colleges, and a sanitary system, in pursuance of the report of the sanitary commission, which had just published the results of its inquiries. The proposals about the Irish colleges deprived the ministers of the companionship of Mr. Gladstone, who conceived himself to be deprived of liberty to proceed by certain opinions which he had published before he came into office, concerning the relations between a Christian church and state. Mr. Gladstone carefully explained that he had no thought of casting censure on his colleagues, or of deciding what ought to be done under the peculiar circumstances of any society. He acted with a view to the preservation of his own consistency, after having addressed the world in a published treatise. This explanation extinguished the reports which were prevalent of critical and dangerous measures to be proposed by the ministry, which had so alarmed Mr. Gladstone as to cause his retirement. Everybody was sorry to lose him; and the general impression seemed to be that he was more scrupulous than was necessary. But recent experience of Whig tenacity of office had disposed men to value even an undue delicacy.

According to Sir R. Peel's new and advantageous plan of bringing forward the financial statement at the earliest possible time, the discussion on the income-tax was entered upon on the 14th of February. Much had been expected from the premier on the occasion; but his speech surpassed anticipation—being indeed one of the finest of his many fine financial expositions. He was in excellent spirits; and with good reason. The improvement in the revenue was such that a surplus of £5,000,000 at the least would be found in the exchequer in the next April. But our rapidly extending commerce required increased naval guardianship; and he intended to propose an increased naval expenditure of £1,000,000. There were to be new naval stations in the Chinese seas, in the Pacific, and on the coast of Africa. If the income-tax were abolished, there might be no deficiency the next year; but there would the

year after. To the minister it appeared wiser to continue the income-tax, and use the opportunity of the surplus to reduce more customs-duties. First, he took the sugar-duties. He proposed to reduce the duty on unrefined sugar from the West Indies and the Mauritius from 25*s.* 3*d.* to 14*s.*, and that on East India to 18*s.* 8*d.*, in order to preserve the existing proportions. The protective duty on foreign free-labour sugar was to be reduced to 9*s.* 4*d.*, so that duty on such foreign sugar would now be 23*s.* 2*d.* The partially-refined sugars of British production were reduced from 25*s.* 3*d.* to 16*s.* 4*d.*; that from India to 21*s.* 9*d.*; and that on free-labour foreign to 28*s.* Thus, while the protecting duty on unrefined sugar was lowered to 9*s.* 4*d.*, that on partially-refined was increased by 11*s.* 4*d.* The prohibitory duty on refined sugar was exchanged, as regarded British produce, for one of 18*s.* 8*d.* on refined, and 21*s.* on double-refined sugar. It was expected that these changes would reduce the price of sugar to the consumer at least 1¼*d.* per pound; more probably 1½*d.* The loss to the revenue in the first year was calculated at £1,300,000. Next, all the export-duties which remained on the list were to be abolished. Among these, was that on coal; and the minister declared his expectation that the coal-owners would give to the consumer the benefit of the release, and that no more would be heard of combinations to restrict the supply of coal, and to enhance its price. The loss from the abolition of the coal-duty was estimated at £120,000. Next, it was proposed to abolish the duties on 430 out of 813 articles of raw material of manufactures; a change which would extinguish the troublesome and burdensome warehousing system. This would release the raw material of silk, hemp, and flax; certain yarns; furniture woods; animal and vegetable manures; and a great number of ores, drugs, and dye-stuffs. Staves for coopers' work were another exempted article, on which alone the loss to the treasury would be £30,000. The loss on the 430 articles was estimated at £320,000; a sum well worth supplying in another way, in consideration of such a disburdening of manufactures as was proposed. A more important article of raw material than any of these was cotton-wool. Though it yielded a revenue more than double the whole 430—

namely, £680,000—the minister proposed to sweep away the duty altogether. So much for the customs-duties. As for the excise, the auction-duty was to be abolished, and some alteration to be made in auctioneers' licences. The glass-duty had amounted to 200 and even 300 per cent. on its manufacture. It was now to be remitted. The excise-man was now no longer to intrude his mischievous and vexatious presence in glass-houses; and the people might enjoy the envied privilege of some other countries in having various articles of domestic convenience made of the cleanly and beautiful material of glass. But there would be something better than the comfort of having milk-pans, handles of doors and drawers, lamps, and candlesticks, &c., of glass; something better than rivalling the splendid Bohemian glass to be found in our drawing-rooms; something better than the spread of plate-glass windows: Sir R. Peel explained to the House that the balance-spring of a chronometer he held in his hand, made of glass, was more to be relied on amidst extreme changes of temperature than one of metal; and thus the purposes of science would be promoted, as they must be by the removal of every impediment in the way of the improvement of lenses and the perfecting of light-houses, and of optical instruments of every kind. In the opinion of the sanitary commissioners, and of all who knew most of the state of Ireland, the removal of the glass-duty was likely to prove of more advantage to the health and comfort of the poor than even the repeal of the window-duty. This important article, charged with duty two or three times exceeding its natural cost, had yielded £642,000—a sum little worth the social mischief of the tax. The total loss by these reductions would be about £3,338,000; nearly amounting to the estimated surplus of April twelvemonths—supposing the naval expenditure to be increased as proposed.' This was without reckoning the decrease in the public establishments which would follow upon so vast a reduction of taxation. The experiment would be called a bold one, and so it was; but the results of the former great experiment of the same kind were very encouraging. The income-tax had not caused any visible reduction in other branches of revenue; while the losses in the customs branch were in

course of being rapidly filled up. The term for which the continuance of the income-tax was proposed was, again, three years. As no one could foresee the approaching potato-rot, there was every reason to anticipate that, in April 1848, the tax might be removed; and this was the hope held out by the minister.

The most obvious thing about this scheme was that there was no popularity-seeking in it. There had been no agitation against the taxes now repealed, while there could be no doubt of the delight of the nation if the income-tax had been abolished. With such a surplus, a less far-sighted minister would have abolished it. Sir R. Peel, instead of giving this immediate delight, preferred using the opportunity of prosperity to strengthen and deepen the foundations of our industrial and commercial welfare. The obvious greatness of this policy secured respect for his scheme, even from those who most opposed particular portions of it.

When the discussion came on, on the 17th, it appeared that many members entertained objections to one or another portion of the scheme; but the continuance of the income-tax was—to the great satisfaction of the country at large, who by this time understood their own interest in its continuance till free-trade should be fully obtained—voted by a majority of 208 in a House of 318. The strongest opposition, because the best grounded in principle, was against the sugar-duties, Mr. Milner Gibson moving a resolution against differential duties. But ministers were too strong to be effectually opposed on any part of their measure; and their bills became law on the 8th of May.

At the close of the session it appeared to observers as if scarcely anything but the corn-laws had been talked of, when once the business of the budget had been settled. Whatever subject was introduced, that of the corn-laws presently appeared and swallowed it up. The farmer's friends were complaining that wheat was at 45*s.* in spite of the new sliding-scale; and the farmer's other kind of friends, the free-traders, were complaining on his behalf that he could not make his land answer, on account of legal restriction under the name of protection. The new manure, called guano, was brought, at vast expense, from

a distance of almost half the world, when the farmer might obtain a far better manure, and more of it, on his land, if he might only import provender for a sufficient proportion of stock. The land was not half cultivated; and the peasantry were consequently insufficiently employed, and the labouring-classes insufficiently fed. Other speakers had compassion for the landlords; and others again for the labourers. From whatever point the question was looked at, it was clear that all the three classes who, however opposed in reality, were included together under the designation of 'the agricultural interest,' were in a low and discontented state—and while it was so, the question of the corn-laws must of necessity be always coming uppermost. Mr. Cobden moved for a committee of inquiry into the existing agricultural distress and its causes, and got out what he wanted to say before he was defeated by a majority of 92 in a House of 334. The answer of the government, by the mouth of Mr. Sidney Herbert, was that such committees were never of any use; that knowledge enough had been obtained already; and that the sensitive agricultural interest would be alarmed, and suppose that government contemplated the withdrawal of their protection. Whatever he said in evidence of the improving condition of agriculture was overthrown by the counter-statements of Conservatives as well as free-traders, who brought proof, from the votes of agricultural bodies in various parts of England, that the distress was not light and partial, but general and very severe. There were a few unguarded words, however, in Mr. Herbert's speech which did more good to the free-trade cause than all the feeble things he said—not in favour of the principle of protection, for he said nothing of the sort—but against immediate change. Mr. Sidney Herbert was a young man, and ardent, as young men in or out of the government usually are, in political discussion. His ardour found little scope in a negative and halting speech like that which he had to make in reply to Mr. Cobden; and it broke out in a sentence, one of whose phrases was never again dropped while the controversy lasted: 'He must add further, as the representative of an agricultural constituency, that it would be distasteful to the agriculturists to come whining

to parliament at every period of temporary distress; nor would they do so. Parliament have accorded to the agriculturists a certain amount of reduced protection. With that they are content; and in adverse circumstances, such as failure of crop and the like, they would meet them manfully, and put their shoulders to the wheel. . . . He was of opinion that they could not do better than to follow the excellent advice . . . . to expend capital on their farms and in improvements of the land, and so by their own efforts restore prosperity. The government had no wish to maintain a high monopoly without alteration, as it had proved; nor had it made any promises to the agriculturists of certain prices in corn, which they knew that no law could give.' Such language as this from a representative of an agricultural constituency, was received with dismay by the farmers all over England. They complained of the mockery of exhorting them to put capital into their land when their capital was all gone; they were shocked at the avowal that prices could not be regulated by law; they were assured at last, in the roughest way, that they were to have no more aid from the government; but the insufferable insult was the phrase about coming 'whining' for protection. The free-traders thanked the young statesman for that word; and they made good use of it as long as it was wanted. From that night, too, they looked upon him, and therefore upon his colleagues, as their own. Whatever Mr. Herbert and his colleagues might themselves think of their position and prospects, it was clear to the free-traders everywhere that they wanted only a little more enlightenment—a little further disentanglement from the prejudices of a life—to join heartily in sweeping away the mischief of protection to agriculture. There was now no difference of principle between the ministry and the free-traders. It had become a mere question of prudence. In a narrow sense it was called a question of good-faith; but those who most strongly insisted that all actual pledges must be kept, perceived that the time must be near when conviction of the truth on the part of the farmers themselves must bring on an absolution on every hand.

A few nights after the vote on Mr. Cobden's motion, the

cause of the free-traders was well pleaded by an antagonist. Mr. Miles moved that the surplus revenue of the time should be applied to the relief of the agricultural interest; and he made bitter complaints of the last sliding-scale as wholly ineffectual for the relief of the farmers. His speech was one long complaint of the plenty that overspread the land —the abundance of corn and the cheapness of meat. He laid himself open to the admonitory reply that it was impossible to set about making food scarce and dear; and that the proper course evidently was for the farmers to study how to produce the requisite abundance at home by improved cultivation, without which it must assuredly be obtained from abroad. As Sir James Graham observed —premising that he considered protection to agriculture just and necessary—Mr. Miles's statements required rather a repeal of the corn-laws, and of what remained of the tariff, than so small a measure as he proposed; but Sir James Graham did not admit the facts with regard to the severity and prevalence of agricultural distress. Before the debate closed, some words were uttered by an enemy of the government which, read after the event, proved what expectations were abroad. The rancour and levity of Mr. Disraeli's speeches prevent their being relied on for accuracy of statement; but, like all other speeches, they make unconscious revelations of fact which are valuable in the retrospect. On this occasion, while the tone of insult goes for nothing, the prophecy is a fact of some weight. After saying that Sir R. Peel 'sends down his valet, who says in the genteelest manner, "We can have no whining here,"' Mr. Disraeli proceeded: 'Protection appears to be in about the same condition that Protestantism was in 1828. The country will draw its moral. For my part, if we are to have free-trade, I, who honour genius, prefer that such measures should be proposed by the honourable member for Stockport [Mr. Cobden], than by one who, through skilful parliamentary manœuvres, has tampered with the generous confidence of a great people and of a great party. For myself, I care not what may be the result. Dissolve, if you please, the parliament you have betrayed, and appeal to the people who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains this at least—the

opportunity of expressing thus publicly my belief that a Conservative government is an organised hypocrisy.'

Mr. Miles's motion being negatived, two more debates on the great subject remained. On the 3rd of June, Mr. Ward moved for a committee of inquiry on the burdens and exemptions of the landed interest; and on the 10th, Mr. Villiers brought forward his annual motion on the corn-laws. On Mr. Ward's motion, the Protectionists' majority was 182 to 109; and on Mr. Villiers's, 254 to 122. These debates showed a marked advance in the question. Sir James Graham repeated with increased emphasis his conviction that the prosperity of the landed interest was dependent on that of other classes; and that a gradual repeal of protection would prove to be necessary for agriculture, as for every other interest. He only protested against suddenness. Another significant fact was that Lord J. Russell, in bringing forward a set of resolutions on the condition of the labouring-classes, declared that he could not now recommend the fixed duty of 8*s.* which he had proposed in 1841. He supposed no one would propose a smaller duty than 4*s.*; and he, if it was his affair, should propose one of 4*s.*, 5*s.*, or 6*s.* The cause was now felt to be won. It was universally understood that Lord J. Russell never went before public opinion, and that he rarely, if ever, knew the extent and bearing of public opinion. If he, then, admitted that four years had authorised him to reduce his fixed duty one-half—for he invited pressure to make it 4*s.*—it became almost a calculable matter how soon the Whig leader would admit that the other half of his fixed duty was indefensible. And the amusing looseness of his terms of proposal—the offered choice of 4*s.*, 5*s.*, or 6*s.*—gave the strongest impression of a temporary playing with the subject, in preparation for working it seriously. From this night, it was taken for granted everywhere that the Whig leaders were in competition with the existing ministry for the repeal of the corn-laws; and even the question of time was brought within a narrow compass.

The royal speech on the prorogation of parliament, on the 9th of August, was the last thoroughly cheerful speech which the nation was to enjoy for some time. In the

account given to her majesty, through the speaker, of the work of the session, we find that, besides the business already noted—Irish education, British railways, and fiscal improvements—the parliament had amended the law of Scotland in regard to the relief of the poor, promoted the drainage of land and enclosure of commons, and extended the provisions of the Bank Act of last year, with some modifications, to the banks of Scotland and Ireland. The prevailing impression of those who watched the course of parliamentary affairs was, that the disintegration of parties was proceeding more and more rapidly, as the commercial element rose above the agricultural; and that from this change there could be no rest or pause till the agricultural interest had obtained that freedom, and consequent stimulus and intelligence, which had caused the expansion of interests that were erroneously considered to be antagonistic.

Meantime, it had begun to rain. It began to rain, after a cold and late spring, at the beginning of the summer; and it seemed as if it was never going to leave off again. In some parts of the country, the sun was scarcely seen from the month of May till the next spring. Those who first marked the perseverance of the soft-falling rain thought of the budding and blossoming promised in Scripture, where the snow and rain are shown forth as illustrations of the fertilising influences of Providence; and thus far, there was nothing but hope of good. Then, as the fall went on, with less softness, and more chill, and fewer intermissions, men began to fear for the harvest, and to calculate that much dry foreign wheat would be necessary to mix with our own damp and unripened grain. Then arose the fear that our own inferior grain would not keep, so thoroughly ready for sprouting would some of it appear to be; and, in the midst of this, it became clear that throughout Europe, with a few local exceptions, the harvest would prove a deficient one; so that, unless there was unusual abundance in America, the prospect was a fearful one. Still, the most sagacious and the most timid were far from conceiving what the rain was doing by its persevering continual soaking into the ground. First, a market-gardener here and there, a farmer, an Irish cottier, saw a brown spot appear on the margin of the leaf of the

potato, and did not remember ever to have seen such a thing before. The brown spot grew black and spread, and covered the stalk, till a whole potato-field looked as if a scorching wind had passed over it. Yet, perhaps, the roots might appear to be in a good state; and one man would let the plants alone, while another would mow off the tops, and wait to see what happened. The stealthy rain had, by some means yet as mysterious as ever, generated some minute plague—of what nature nobody yet knows, if indeed it is certain that the rain was the instrument—a plague so minute that no microscope has yet convicted it, yet so powerful that it was soon to overthrow governments, and derange commerce, and affect for all time to come the political fate of England, and settle the question of the regeneration or the destruction of Ireland. The minute plague spread and spread, till it blackened thousands of acres, and destroyed the food of millions of men. In some wholesome regions, the last to be affected, the inhabitants would hardly believe what they heard and read. The newspapers were exaggerating shamefully for some political object; the League was trading on the rain, and frightening the public; private correspondents were credulous, and too fond of excitement; their own potatoes, and most of their neighbours', looked very well; and the clergy were again ready with rebuke of anxiety and doubt, saying that there had always been talk of bad weather, but that, somehow or other, there was always a harvest. When, in such a favoured region, two or three benevolent gentry stored up their own sound potatoes for the use of the sick and the aged in case of need, and laid in rice and macaroni and other substitutes for winter use at their own tables, their neighbours for a time laughed at the precaution, and said that potatoes were abundant and excessively cheap in the markets. But soon the change appeared even in these healthiest districts. A man might exhibit his green and flourishing crop to a stranger, and say that he should take it up on Monday: on that night would come a thunder-storm; and the next morning, if the owner stirred the soil of his blackened field with a pitchfork, up came such a steaming stench as showed him that his field was turned putrid. And then it became known

why potatoes were abundant and cheap in the markets. Everybody was eager to sell before his potatoes had time to rot. What was to become of the poor Irish if this went on, was now the most anxious question of the time.

As for the League, it was busy enough during the rain; but not more than it had been before. The Agricultural Protection Society, which had risen up in opposition to it, declared, in the preceding December, that the League had ceased its missionary efforts, and become a mere registration-club, while it had itself circulated 30,000 copies of an address in favour of protection. The League registration went on quite as diligently as was alleged; but in another month—January 1845—it appeared that 150 meetings in parliamentary boroughs, and fifty elsewhere, had been held in little more than two years; that 15,000 copies of the *League* newspaper were weekly distributed; and that 2,000,000 copies of other publications had been sent abroad. Of letters, 30,000 had been received during the year, and 300,000 sent out. The next May showed that the League was something more than a registration-club. Covent Garden Theatre was fitted up with great skill and taste for a bazaar; and the show was something quite unlike anything ever seen before in our country. In the great Gothic hall into which the theatre was transformed, there was a display of manufactures—freely presented in aid of the League Fund—which sold for £25,000, besides leaving a sufficient quantity to make another large bazaar at Manchester. It was open from the 5th to the 29th of May; and 125,000 persons paid for admission within that time. Four hundred ladies conducted the sales; and, generally speaking, each contributing town had a stall, with its name, and sometimes its civic arms, painted above. The porcelain and cutlery exhibitions, the mirrors and grindstones, the dolls and the wheat-sacks, shoes and statuettes, antiquities and the last fashion of coloured muslins, flannels and plated goods, and anatomical preparations, laces, and books, made a curious and wonderful display, which was thought to produce more effect on some parliamentary minds than all the eloquence yet uttered in the Commons. Yet, after all this, the League had greater things to do. We find it decreeing the levy of £250,000 for the promo-

tion of free-trade; and, in December, there was a meeting at Manchester, at which one member subscribed £1500; twenty-two subscribed £1000 each; one, £700; and eighteen, £500. The enthusiasm had risen as the crisis drew on; and the sum of £62,000 was presently obtained within the room, while the zeal elsewhere was such that there was no doubt of the realisation of the whole quarter of a million, if it should be wanted. And all this was after £122,508 had been raised by previous subscriptions.

By this time, however, there were many who doubted whether either money or effort would be required much longer. The rain having gone on, people began inquiring in September whether the ports were to be opened; and next, whether we could be sure of supplies, at short notice and in a prevalent bad season, if the ports were opened to-morrow. Then some people who had before talked without thinking, began to see how dangerous such precariousness was, and how much more secure against famine we should be if foreign countries should raise corn for us every year, instead of being called upon to supply us out of their own stock, or from an accidental surplus. On the 10th of October, Lord Ashley addressed a letter to the electors of Dorsetshire, which was eagerly read all over the kingdom. He declared his conviction that the destiny of the corn-laws was fixed, and that 'the leading men of the great parties in the legislature are by no means disinclined to their eventual abolition.' In the beginning of November, cabinet-councils were frequent; and rumours were abroad that extensive inquiries had been for some time making by the minister about the results of the harvest. Rumour spoke also of disagreements in the cabinet; but these were supposed to relate merely to the question of opening the ports. At this time, Lord Morpeth, a late Whig minister, joined the League, and sent a letter with his contribution, in which he declared: 'I wish to record in the most emphatic way I can my conviction that the time is come for a total repeal of the corn-laws, and my protest against the continued inaction of the State in the present emergency.' Lord Morpeth declared that he wrote this letter 'without concert or consultation with any one else;' and events proved that he wrote it without any more insight

than people in general had into what 'the State'—that is, the cabinet—was about. Lord John Russell presently showed himself determined not to share the 'inaction of the State.' He addressed to the electors of London a letter from Edinburgh, dated November 22, 1845, which he declared to be occasioned by the separating of the ministers without apparent result, after their frequent cabinet meetings. After confessing his changes of opinion during the last twenty years, and relating the stages of his advocacy of a continually lessening amount of fixed duty, Lord J. Russell declared: 'It is no longer worth while to contend for a fixed duty. . . . . The struggle to make bread scarce and dear, when it is clear that part, at least, of the additional price goes to increase rent, is a struggle deeply injurious to an aristocracy which, this quarrel once removed, is strong in property, strong in the construction of our legislature, strong in opinion, strong in ancient associations and the memory of immortal services. Let us then unite to put an end to a system which has proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture, the source of bitter divisions among classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people.' This invitation was valuable as a preparation for the deed to be done by other hands. But it was too late as regarded Lord J. Russell himself. It met with no hearty response. His position would now have been a glorious one if he had ever before advocated perfect freedom of the corn-trade; and he would have been trusted if he had been a Conservative leader, like his rival—a Conservative leader convinced and converted by the stringency of circumstances; but, as an avowed leader of a Liberal party, converted only at the moment when he should have been attaining the aim of many years—at the moment when his Conservative rival was undergoing the agony of conversion—he was not trusted; and it was impossible that he should be. This letter, on which he clearly founded great hopes, did him no good; the Conservative convert was appointed to the work. When the time came for explanations in parliament, Lord J. Russell made complaints of his letter being regarded as a party move—as a bid for office; but there was one feature in the letter which deprived him of all

right to resent such an interpretation—it abounded in taunts and expressions of spleen towards Sir R. Peel. The whole composition has the air of being aimed at the minister.

It is known by means of ministerial explanations afterwards, what took place during this period when all the world was on the watch, and no one could learn anything. The cabinet councils held between the 1st and the 6th of November were for the purpose of considering the information sent in from Ireland about the potato-crop, and from the whole kingdom about the general crop. As regarded Ireland, the reports were alarming beyond description. The ministers could deliberate upon them without disturbance from without; for as yet there was no agitation about opening the ports which could affect the action of the government—no petitions, no urgency from public meetings or in the newspapers. The desire of Sir R. Peel at that time was to throw open the ports by an order in council, or by calling parliament together immediately for the purpose; but only three of his colleagues agreed with him; and the ministers separated, on the understanding that they should reassemble at the call of the premier. His hope was that the growing alarm would presently convince all his colleagues of the necessity of opening the ports. Commissions were organised for the prevention of a sudden pressure of extreme distress, especially in Ireland; and on the 25th of November, the ministers again met, to prepare instructions for these commissions. The instructions were agreed on; but then it appeared to the premier that these instructions were inconsistent with the maintenance of the corn-laws in their existing state. He reserved to himself the power of insuring a free supply from abroad; and now his colleagues had become so impressed by the daily increasing alarm as to afford a hope that they would withdraw the opposition with which they before met the proposal. But Lord Stanley could not yield; nor could one or two others. If the opening of the ports had taken place at the beginning of November, it would have been done with a strong hand; but the delay had admitted of the appearance of Lord J. Russell's letter; and now, if the cabinet was not absolutely united—if a single resignation

took place—it would appear as if the letter of a rival had determined the minister's views, and his acts would have lost all their moral weight.

It was in the midst of the second series of consultations that an incident occurred which startled the whole kingdom, and gave the newspapers plenty to say. On the 4th of December, the *Times* announced that it was the intention of government to repeal the corn-laws, and to call parliament together in January for the purpose. Some ministerial papers doubted, and then indignantly denied this. Some journals said that it could not be known to the *Times*, because the fact could transpire only through breach of the cabinet oath. Others said that it might fairly be a matter of inference from the general policy being understood; but to this there was the objection that the *Times* asserted that its news was not a matter of inference but of fact; and the ordinary government papers persevered in denying the truth of the news altogether. The *Times* was scolded, insulted, jeered at, lectured; and everybody was warned not to mind the *Times*, but everybody did mind it; and the *Times* persevered, day after day, week after week, in haughtily asserting that its intelligence would be found correct within an assigned period. Meantime, the general conviction was complete that the *Times* had some peculiar means of information. One report was that the Duke of Wellington had come down to the Horse Guards in great wrath, swearing, as he threw himself from his horse, at the pass things had come to when the corn-laws were to be given up; but, besides that such a freak was not very like the shrewd and loyal Duke of Wellington, there was no reason here why the *Times* should be exclusively in possession of the information. There are some, of course, who know, and many more who believe they know, how the thing happened; but it is not fitting to record in a permanent form the chit-chat of London about any but the historical bearings of an incident like this. The *Times* had true information, and that is all that is important to the narrative. As we have said, the announcement was made on the 4th of December. On the 5th, the *Standard* exhibited a conspicuous title to a counter-statement, 'Atrocious Fabrication by the *Times*;' but

meanwhile, 'the effect of the announcement by the *Times* at the Corn Exchange was immense surprise, not so much displeasure as might have been expected, and an instant downward tendency in the price of grain.' So said other papers. 'We adhere to our original announcement,' said the *Times* of December 6, 'that parliament will meet early in January, and that a repeal of the corn-laws will be proposed in one House by Sir R. Peel, and in the other by the Duke of Wellington.' The free-traders so far gave weight to the assertion as to announce everywhere with diligence that they would accept of 'nothing short of total repeal—not a shilling, nor a farthing, of duty should be imposed without sound reason shown.'

For a few days after this, the League was at the height of its glory. The agriculturists were cowed, and could only groan and murmur; men were out all day in the streets, to learn the opinions of their neighbours, and, above all, the expectations of Leaguers. On Sunday the 7th, it was understood that the Duke of Wellington had certainly, though most reluctantly, yielded. On Monday, it was observed that he did not attend the council; on Tuesday, it was believed that he would not act with his colleagues on this subject, and, by refusing to do so, had virtually withdrawn his assent. On Wednesday, there was a privy-council; on Thursday morning, it was understood that the meeting of parliament was somewhat deferred, as if to gain time to settle some difficulty. Throughout the day, the rumours of dissensions in the cabinet grew stronger; and at night, it was made known, all over London, that the ministry had resigned.

It may truly be said that the intelligence was received throughout the country with dismay. The full value of Sir R. Peel was not yet known—the value of his moral earnestness when at last freed from the shackles of educational prejudice and party intimacies—but the value of his administration was everywhere felt. For above four years now the nation had reposed upon his wise government—reposed on his safe and skilful financial management, and thorough efficiency in all the business of governing; and he and his colleagues had moreover carried us through a period of deep depression and fearful

disorder; replenished the sources of our manufactures and commerce; reinstated our finances; given benefits to Ireland; sanctioned the principle and practice of religious liberty; and strengthened and settled the whole fabric of our polity, as far as the vigorous and skilful administration of the national affairs for nearly five years could do so. And now, just when the most important of all existing questions had to be conducted to an issue, he was to step aside for those who had no more right than he, on any ground, to the management of the business, and far less power of every kind. The regret was but temporary, however, for the Peel ministry was presently restored.

Sir R. Peel thought it due to the magnitude of the interest at stake to try no experiment which might fail. When assured, therefore, of the dissent of his colleagues, he immediately resigned. Lord Stanley and the other dissentients would not undertake to form a government; and the queen, of her own choice, sent for Lord J. Russell. Lord J. Russell was at Edinburgh. The royal summons reached him at night on the 8th of December. As there was then no railway to London, it was the 10th before he arrived in town, and the 11th before he appeared in the queen's presence at Osborne, in the Isle of Wight. He had made up his mind that, if asked to undertake the formation of a ministry, he must decline, because his party were in a minority in the Commons of from 90 to 100. This was his answer when the queen made the expected request; but Sir R. Peel had left with the queen a paper in which, after declaring the reasons of his resignation, he avowed his readiness, 'in his private capacity, to aid and give every support to the new minister whom her majesty might select to effect a settlement of the question of the corn-laws.' This wholly changed the state and prospect of the case. Lord J. Russell returned to London to consult such of his friends as were within reach. Through Sir J. Graham, Lord J. Russell was put in possession of all the information on which the late ministers had proceeded; but not of the details of their proposed measures. It was no time for a general election. None but a rash minister would dream of requiring it while the country was in strong excitement, and under the visible

doom of a great calamity. Instead of this, the thing to be done was to frame such a measure of corn-law repeal as would secure the support of Sir R. Peel and the colleagues who had adhered to him. After a good deal of correspondence, through the queen, of difficult transaction by statesmen so delicately placed with regard to each other, Lord J. Russell conceived himself justified in attempting to form an administration; and he communicated with the sovereign to that effect on the 18th of December. But, next morning, an insuperable difficulty arose. One of the friends on whom he had confidently reckoned as a coadjutor declined to enter the cabinet. This was Lord Grey. Highly as Lord J. Russell valued him, he would at any other time have endeavoured to form a cabinet without him, at his own desire; but the position of the Whigs was now too critical—or, at least, their leader thought so—to admit the risk of such speculation as would be excited by the exclusion of Lord Grey. On the 20th, therefore, the queen was finally informed that Lord John Russell found it impossible to form an administration.

Among the newspaper reports of the public talk during this interval, we find a few words in italics about the popular surprise at there being 'no mention of Lord Grey' in the list of Whig conferences; and close beside this, we meet with notice of the 'alarm' excited by the consideration that Lord Palmerston must have some office, and most probably the foreign department. Our foreign relations were now in a critical state, as our history of the French and American questions will have shown; and there were many who stood in fear of Lord Palmerston's 'talent of keeping perpetually open all vital questions and dangerous controversies.' It was well understood that Lord Grey thought it unsafe to make Lord Palmerston foreign minister at such a juncture; and that he declined to act inconsistently with his own long-avowed principles of peace, by sitting in the cabinet with a minister who had done more than any other man to foster the war-spirit in 1840 and 1841. The disappointed Whig party bitterly complained that 'Lord Grey had done it all;' but with the country at large Lord Grey lost nothing by this difficult act of self-exclusion, or by his honourable silence

in the midst of the censure which was abundantly poured out upon him.

On Friday the 19th, the queen intimated to Sir R. Peel that, as their political relation was about to terminate, she wished to see him the next day, to bid him farewell. Before he went to Windsor on the Saturday, he was informed by Lord John Russell of the failure of his enterprise; and when he entered the queen's presence, he was told that, so far from taking leave, he must prepare for the resumption of office. He returned to town as minister of the crown, and found no difficulty in reconstructing his cabinet. Lord Stanley of course retired. All the others remained—all but one who had died suddenly from the anxiety of the crisis. Lord Wharncliffe had been suffering from gout, but no danger was apprehended. He was, however, in no state to bear the turmoil of the time; and he suddenly sank on the 19th of December, in the seventieth year of his age. As president of the council, he had proved himself a zealous and effective minister; and his earnestness in fulfilling to the utmost such provisions for education as had been obtained, secured him much gratitude from society. It was an untoward time for a West Riding election; but this elevation of Mr. Stuart Wortley to the peerage rendered it necessary; and Lord Morpeth was returned to his old seat without opposition. Mr. Gladstone became colonial secretary, instead of Lord Stanley; and the Duke of Buccleuch succeeded Lord Wharncliffe as president of the council.

And now, once more, all was going well—well for the people; and, in a large view, well for the minister. His position was at once an humbling and a glorious one; his course a hard and yet a straight one. He had to stand up in the face of the world, and say that he had been in error all his life, and that he found himself compelled now to achieve that which he had all his life opposed. This was the hard part—accompanied as it must be by the rage of disappointed partisans, the indignant grief of old friends, and perhaps the intemperate triumph of old enemies. But his position was a glorious one, if he could but show himself equal to it. If, instead of making this the beginning of a new career, as some anticipated, he

settled it with himself that this should be his last scene of power, and he could endure calmly what he must go through as a necessary retribution for previous error, and close his career with giving to the nation the benefit it most wanted in the best possible manner, this last scene of his administration might be the noblest. His course must be hard, for there were terrible storms ready to burst in parliament; and when he had, by a stern and self-forgetting rule, held his party together for the passage of the single great measure now in his hand, his party would fall to pieces, and he might be left alone in his place in the legislature, after a life of industry and eminent political prosperity. But not the less was his course clear. He must propose and carry through a total repeal of the corn-laws, whatever became of himself. This must be his single and his final aim; and those who knew anything of the 'alacrity of spirit' with which a strong and honourable mind enters on a great work of reparation, self-sacrifice, and general justice, believed that Sir R. Peel would now make manifest to the utmost the nobleness of his position and the singleness of his aim.

As for the Duke of Wellington, the peremptory and inflexible, who had gone through so many changes, and must now go through one more—everybody knew, by dint of repetition, what he would say. He would say that he could not desert his sovereign. And this is what he did say. 'At all events,' he declared, 'whatever that measure may be, I must say this: that, situated as I am in this country—highly rewarded as I have been by the sovereign and the people of England—I could not refuse that sovereign to aid her, when called upon, to form a government, in order to enable her majesty to meet her parliament, and to carry on the business of the country. Upon that ground, my lords, I present myself to your lordships.'

CHAPTER XV.

Opening of the Session—Further Remission of Duties—The Revenue prosperous—The Corn Duties—Relief to Farmers—The Issue—The Minister—Nature of the Reform—Dissolution of the League—Irish Life Bill—Resignation of Ministers—The retiring Minister.

The royal speech, delivered by the queen in person on the 19th of January, expressed satisfaction in the results of the repeal of customs-duties, as far as they had yet gone, and recommended to parliament the consideration whether the repeal of restrictions might not be carried yet further; whether there might not still be a remission 'of the existing duties upon many articles, the produce or manufacture of other countries.'

The remission took place on several articles of the tariff without much opposition. Almost the only raw materials still subject to duty were tallow and timber; and these were to be extensively reduced. In consideration of the release of so much raw material, the manufacturers were expected to acquiesce in the reduction of some remaining articles of manufacture; and this they showed all willingness to do. And well they might; for the minister's exposition proved the vast increase of the silk manufacture in England, in proportion to the removal of duties. There was to be a considerable reduction of the duty on silk manufactures, with more certainty of levy; and the duties on cotton and woollen fabrics were removed or lessened one-half. The differential duties on free-labour sugar were reduced—the higher from 11*s.* 8*d.* to 8*s.*; and the lower from 9*s.* 4*d.* to 5*s.* 10*d.* On brandy and foreign spirits, the duty was brought down nearer to the point which might obviate smuggling; that is, from 22*s.* 10*d.* per gallon to 15*s.* Animal food and vegetables were to be admitted duty free; and butter, cheese, hops, and cured fish, reduced one-half. Live animals were freed from duty; and a considerable number of minor and 'unenume-

rated articles.' The minister was strengthened by the successes of former years, and by the absorbing of men's mind in the corn subject; and these remissions passed without any effectual opposition. The sugar-duties, however, were left over for subsequent consideration.

The revenue showed indisputably the results of former remissions. There was this year a clear surplus of £2,380,600. There was a considerable increase in the consumption of those excisable commodities which are connected with the comfort of the mass of the people; more money was in the savings-banks; and there was something better still—a more significant and more blessed token of prosperity than any other—there was a marked decrease of crime. But for the impending famine, there could be no doubt that our country was on the way to a prosperity which must for ever have settled opinions about the policy of free-trade.

It was on the 27th of January that the above tariff reductions were proposed, in the same speech that was to announce the ministerial plan about the corn-laws. 'Every crevice' into which a stranger could thrust himself was occupied; and hundreds who held tickets were obliged to remain in the streets. Prince Albert and the Duke of Cambridge sat below the bar. The minister's speech lasted four hours. It was listened to for the most part in quietness; but some paragraphs were vehemently cheered by the opposition.

All agricultural produce which serves as cattle-food, such as buckwheat and Indian corn, was to be admitted duty free. It was this provision which wrought better than any other precaution whatever to reduce the pressure of the subsequent famine in Ireland; for Indian meal is a good article of human food—far superior to potatoes. All colonial grain was to bear a merely nominal duty. This would be good news in our Australian colonies, whenever the tidings could reach so far. As for other grain, all protection was to cease in three years; and that time was allowed for the farmers to accommodate themselves to the change. In the interval, the duties were to be considerably reduced. When wheat was under 48*s.* per quarter, the duty was to be 10*s.* When at 1*s.* higher, the duty was to

be 1*s.* lower, till wheat should be at 54*s.* and the duty at 4*s.*, after which the duty should not further change. The same principle and proportion were to apply to other kinds of grain. The immediate effect would be to reduce the duty, at the existing price of wheat, from 16*s.* to 4*s.* It was proposed to afford some important relief to the farmers, otherwise than by laying burdens on other classes. Loans of public money were to be attainable by persons contemplating agricultural improvements. The law of settlement was to be so altered as to prevent country parishes from being burdened with labourers when adversity pressed on the manufacturing districts. Five years' industrial residence was henceforth to constitute a settlement. The cost of prisoners was to be taken off the county-rates. By a consolidation of the highway departments—a consolidation which would reduce the boards from 16,000 to about 600—a vast relief from waste and mismanagement would be obtained. Such were the main features of the scheme. Objections naturally sprang up on all sides. The Protectionists were, of course, furious; and their antagonists were sorry—and especially on account of the farmers themselves—that there was to be an interval of three years before the corn-trade was free. The farmers' friends looked on the accompanying provisions of relief as a mere mockery; and some derided the multifarious character of the scheme. But, after all objections were made, there remained the grand and simple fact that in three years the corn-laws would be no more. The manufacturers threw away with joy such remaining duties as had been called a protection to them; and the League leaders, who had invariably declared that they would support any man of any party who would obtain the repeal of the corn-laws, now gave their whole strength to the minister and his scheme.

The debate began on the 9th of February, and extended over twelve nights between that and the 27th, when there was a decision in favour of the government by a majority of 97 in a House of 577. On the 2nd of March, the House went into committee, when four nights more were filled with debate, before the second reading was carried by a majority of 88. A last effort was made, in a debate of

three nights, to prevent a third reading; but it was carried, at four in the morning of the 16th of May, by a majority of 98 in a House of 556 members.

In the Lords, the majority in favour of the second reading was 47 in a full House—a more easy passage than could have been anticipated. The few amendments that were proposed were negatived; the bill passed on the 22nd of June, and became law on the 26th of the same month.

During this long series of debates, every consideration that had ever been urged, for or against a repeal of the corn-laws, was brought up again. There is no need to repeat any of them here. Every personality that could pass the lips of educated men and gentlemen in our period of civilisation was uttered by angry antagonists; and not a few which it is surprising that educated men and gentlemen could listen to without discountenance and rebuke. It would do no good to repeat any of them here. The principal new points, not mere personality, were the extraordinary denial, on the part of the Protectionists, of the existence or probability of famine in Ireland, though such an amount of evidence was laid before the House as might have been expected to bear down all party rancour, and all pride of opinion, and to induce sympathy with the administration in the most prejudiced man in the House. On this, also, there is no occasion to enlarge. Time has shown what the condition of Ireland was, and was to be; and the keenest Protectionist is now probably astonished that he could ever doubt it, after listening to the evidence offered by Sir Robert Peel and Lord Lincoln. On the soundness of that evidence, however, rested so much of the minister's case, that any appreciation of himself and his position was impossible while his detail of facts was denied. His position during the session was therefore hard beyond all parallel. His temper and conduct were worthy of it. He made at first such ample confession of the error of a life; maintained so simply the duty and dignity of avowing error, instead of being obstinate and silent; bore so magnanimously the reproaches which were the natural retribution of the mistake which he had held in common with almost the whole of the legislature and the aristocracy

during the greater part of his life; and was so sustained under his personal trials by a moral enthusiasm sufficiently rare at all times in the House of Commons, and little expected from him, that, before his retirement, he was looked up to with new feelings by generous-minded men of all parties. His own words will best explain his position and his views. 'You have a right, I admit,' he said, in his final speech on the bill, 'to taunt me with any change of opinion on the corn-laws; but when you say that by my adoption of the principles of free-trade, I have acted in contradiction to those principles which I have always avowed during my whole life, that charge, at least, I say, is destitute of foundation. Sir, I will not enter at this late hour into the discussion of any other topic. I foresaw the consequences that have resulted from the measures which I thought it my duty to propose. We were charged with the heavy responsibility of taking security against a great calamity in Ireland. We did not act lightly. We did not form our opinion upon merely local information—the information of local authorities likely to be influenced by an undue alarm. Before I, and those who agreed with me, came to that conclusion, we had adopted every means—by local inquiry, and by sending perfectly disinterested persons of authority to Ireland—to form a just and correct opinion. Whether we were mistaken or not—I believe we were not mistaken—but, even if we were mistaken, a generous construction should be put upon the motives and conduct of those who are charged with the responsibility of protecting millions of subjects of the queen from the consequences of scarcity and famine. Sir, whatever may be the result of these discussions, I feel severely the loss of the confidence of those from almost all of whom I heretofore received a most generous support. So far from expecting them, as some have said, to adopt my opinions, I perfectly recognise the sincerity with which they adhere to their own. I recognise their perfect right, on account of the admitted failure of my speculation, to withdraw from me their confidence. I honour their motives, but I claim, and I always will claim, while intrusted with such powers, and subject to such responsibility, as the minister of this great country is intrusted with and is subject to

—I always will assert the right to give that advice which I conscientiously believe to be conducive to the general wellbeing. I was not considering, according to the language of the honourable member for Shrewsbury, what was the best bargain to make for a party. I was considering first what were the best measures to avert a great calamity, and, as a secondary consideration, to relieve that interest which I was bound to protect from the odium of refusing to acquiesce in measures which I thought to be necessary for the purpose of averting that calamity. Sir, I cannot charge myself or my colleagues with having been unfaithful to the trust committed to us. . . . . If I look to the prerogative of the crown—if I look to the position of the Church—if I look to the influence of the aristocracy—I cannot charge myself with having taken any course inconsistent with Conservative principles, calculated to endanger the privileges of any branch of the legislature, or of any institutions of the country. My earnest wish has been, during my tenure of power, to impress the people of this country with a belief that the legislature was animated by a sincere desire to frame its legislation upon the principles of equity and justice. I have a strong belief that the greatest object which we or any other government can contemplate should be to elevate the social condition of that class of the people with whom we are brought into no direct relation by the exercise of the elective franchise. I wish to convince them that our object has been so to apportion taxation, that we shall relieve industry and labour from any undue burden, and transfer it, so far as is consistent with the public good, to those who are better enabled to bear it. I look to the present peace of this country; I look to the absence of all disturbance—to the non-existence of any commitment for a seditious offence; I look to the calm that prevails in the public mind; I look to the absence of all disaffection; I look to the increased and growing public confidence on account of the course you have taken in relieving trade from restrictions, and industry from unjust burdens; and where there was dissatisfaction, I see contentment; where there was turbulence, I see there is peace; where there was disloyalty, I see there is loyalty; I see a disposition to

confide in you, and not to agitate questions that are at the foundations of your institutions.'

In a later speech, the very last which he delivered before quitting office, he again recurred to the great consolatory ground of the improved condition of those who can least help themselves. He relinquished power, to use his own words, 'with a more lively recollection of the support and confidence I have received during several years, than of the opposition which, during a recent period, I have encountered. In relinquishing power, I shall leave a name, severely censured, I fear, by many who, on public grounds, deeply regret the severance of party ties—deeply regret that severance, not from interested or personal motives, but from the firm conviction that fidelity to party engagements—the existence and maintenance of a great party—constitutes a powerful instrument of government; I shall surrender power, severely censured also by others who, from no interested motive, adhere to the principle of protection, considering the maintenance of it to be essential to the welfare and interests of the country; I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist who, from less honourable motives, clamours for protection because it conduces to his own individual benefit; but it may be that I shall leave a name sometimes remembered with expressions of good-will in the abodes of those whose lot it is to labour, and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow, when they shall recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened with a sense of injustice.'

It was quite true that there was a popular disposition 'not to agitate questions that are at the foundation of our institutions.' The great reform of policy—of procedure—which had now taken place had excluded all present thoughts of organic change from the mind of the people. Inferior in importance as the late enterprise was to that of reform of parliament—inferior in its order, and in its import—it was yet great enough to absorb for the time the political energy of the nation. To arrest the sinking of the agricultural interests of the country, and remove the impediments to a free supply of food, were objects inferior

only to any enterprise of organic change; but they were inferior. It does not follow, however, that organic change may not arise from an inferior order of reform; and in this case it was clear to those who were aware of the facts that the power under the Reform Bill, discovered by Mr. Cobden, of renovating county constituencies must, sooner or later, bring forth vast political results. The system of forty-shilling freehold purchase and registration, begun under the League organisation, did not stop when the League dissolved itself. It proceeds, and at an accelerated rate.

On the 2nd of July, the League was 'conditionally dissolved,' by the unanimous vote of a great meeting of the leaders at Manchester. The body was virtually dissolved; but the executive council had power to call it again into existence, if occasion should arise—that is, if attempts should be made to revive agricultural protection. Mr. Cobden here joyfully closed his seven years' task, which he had prosecuted at the expense of health, fortune, domestic comfort, and the sacrifice of his own tastes in every way. Sir R. Peel had said of him, in his closing speech, that to one man was the great work of repeal owing, and that that man was Richard Cobden; and Mr. Cobden now declared at Manchester that if Sir R. Peel had lost office, he had gained a country. The Leaguers were not called on for more than the first instalment of the quarter of a million they had resolved to raise; and out of that sum, they voted £10,000, in his absence, to their chairman, Mr. James Wilson. Mr. Cobden had sacrificed at least £20,000 in the cause. The country now, at the call of the other chief Leaguers, presented him with above £80,000—not only for the purpose of acknowledging his sacrifices, but also to set him free for life for the political service of his country.

Early in the session, the ministers had introduced a bill for the protection of life in Ireland, where the practice of night-assassination was again partially prevailing. The political jealousy of the time was exercised upon this bill; and it was opposed by a curious medley of members in the Commons, after an easy passage in the Lords. It was thrown out in the Commons, on the same night (June 26)

when the Corn-law Bill passed the Lords. The majority against the ministers was 73. Every one knew that the Peel administration was going out, as soon as the repeal of the corn-laws was achieved; but perhaps this defeat settled the moment. On the 29th, the Duke of Wellington took leave of power in the one House, and Sir R. Peel in the other, in announcing their resignation of office.

In one sense, Sir R. Peel might be said to take leave of power; but his moral power was destined yet to grow stronger. An old and faithful member of opposition, Mr. Hume, said of him, on this last evening, 'That no one ever left power carrying with him so much of the sympathy of the people;' and there were multitudes who could not endure the thought of losing him, at the very moment of his discovering himself to the nation in his greatest aspect. As he left the House on the night of the 29th, leaning on the arm of Sir George Clerk, he was awaited by a quiet multitude outside, who bared their heads at the sight of him, and escorted him to his house. Some of these probably hoped to hail him as minister again some day; for it was a common idea throughout the country that, if there was only one man who could govern the country, that man would have to govern the country, whether he would or no. But he knew better. He knew that his last words were a real farewell.

That which he did not and could not know was the full nobleness of the position which he would henceforth hold. He had nothing more to attain. His wealth had always been great; and it was not in the power even of the sovereign to ennoble him. His honours are of a higher order than those of the peerage, and would be rather impaired than enhanced by his removal from among the Commons. In the Commons he has no party, because there is no party there; and if there were, he has withdrawn from party conflict. He speaks as from his own mind; and his words have singular weight. He sits in the legislature, a man free from personal aims of every kind, at full leisure, and in full freedom to cast light where it is wanted on any hand, to give guidance and sanction, and material for speculation and action in future years, when he will be no more

seen in his place. Men of all parties seem to agree upon one point in regard to Sir R. Peel—that his latest position in the British legislature is the noblest that, in our period of time, can be held by any man.

CHAPTER XVI.

Deaths.—Royal—Of Statesmen and Warriors—Of Artists—Men of Science—Literary Men—Other Benefactors—Living Benefactors—George Stephenson—Barry—Macready—Turner—Wordsworth—Joanna Baillie—Rogers—Alfred Tennyson—Wilson—Jeffrey—Thomas Macaulay—Landor—Hallam—Carlyle—Maria Edgeworth—Bulwer—Dickens—Punch—Herschel—Faraday.

WITH the charm of a youthful sovereign and a fresh royal generation came, necessarily, the mournfulness of seeing the old drop off—the old princes and statesmen and warriors, whose names had been familiar to us all our lives. The Duke of Sussex, the most popular of the sons of George III.—the amiable man, the lover of books and of philosophy, the hero of a love-story in the last century, when he married Lady Augusta Murray—died in April 1843, in the seventy-second year of his age; and his cousin, the Princess Sophia of Gloucester, followed him in November of the next year, at the age of seventy-one. At the time they died, the reading world was learning, by the Diary of Madame D'Arblay, how these affectionate cousins looked, and what they said, in the days of their early youth, when she was brilliantly handsome, and he full of grace and kindness to everybody in his father's court. They had since had much pain and uneasiness in their lives; and it was time that they were at rest.—The illustrious family of the Wellesleys was breaking up. The Marquis Wellesley, who had ruled India when his brother Arthur won his first successes there, died in 1842, in his eighty-third year; and his younger brother—but still some years older than the Duke of Wellington and Lord Cowley—Lord Mornington, followed in 1845. Lord Mornington was Sir R. Peel's predecessor in his early

office of secretary for Ireland. The offices which he subsequently filled were unimportant, except that of postmaster-general, which he held during the short Peel administration of 1835. Lord Wellesley was a much more important man to the nation, not only by his Indian administration, but by his strenuous support of his warrior brother during the Peninsular war, when he had to contend with the timidity and carelessness of the government at home, even more painfully than with the French forces abroad. What his government was in Ireland in 1822, and how his liberality excited the wrath of the ascendency party there, we have seen. His old age was embittered by pecuniary difficulties, such as he had contrived to trouble himself with all his life. The East India Company made liberal gifts to him, in acknowledgment of former services; and after this, his few remaining days slipped away quietly, amidst the solace of books and old friendships; though the wording of some provisions in his will seems to show that he regarded the administration of Lord Melbourne with no more tranquillity than his friend, Lord Brougham, to whose charge he left the vindication of his memory, 'confiding in his justice and honour.'—An old friend and comrade of the Wellesleys, Lord Hill, died in 1842. He had won glory in Spain, Portugal, and France, and finally at Waterloo; and he earned civic gratitude by his admirable administration of the army—which may be called a civic service—between the years 1828 and 1842. No private interest or political bias ever was seen to affect his distribution of patronage—keen as was the watch kept upon him by the opponents of the successive ministries under which he served. He was seventy when he died.—In the group of old and dying men associated in our minds with our last wars, we may note Lieutenant-general Sir Hudson Lowe—perhaps the most abused man of his time. He had the misfortune to be appointed jailer to Napoleon at St. Helena. No man could have occupied that post under any circumstances without undergoing cruel anxiety and perpetual embarrassment; but Sir Hudson Lowe had not that support from the government at home which he had a right to expect; and they allowed him to be victimised by calumny, while the fault was theirs, if

indeed the fallen emperor's lot was less easy than it might have been made. Sir H. Lowe appears to have done all that he could—without thanks, without support, without guidance—under incessant misconstruction from the world, and intolerable insult from his captive. If there was fault, it appears to have been merely of nerve; and the wonder would have been if he could have maintained nerve and judgment under the daily irritation of his position. —Of the old statesmen and politicians, more dropped during this period. Lord Grey, after a sick retirement of a few years, died in his eighty-second year, in July 1845; and in the same month, Lord Canterbury, the speaker of the Commons for so many years, under the name of Sir Charles Manners Sutton. His age was sixty-five.—Lord Wallace, the early friend of Jenkinson and Canning, and a holder of office under Mr. Pitt, died in 1844, with the reputation of a Liberal rather than a Conservative, and mourned by the friends of the liberal measures of the day. He was the predecessor of Mr. Huskisson at the Board of Trade, and had the same clear views of the advantages of free-trade. While master of the Mint, he greatly improved the coinage. He was one of the very few men who rendered substantial service in office and in parliament without exciting party feelings in others—probably because he was able to rise above them himself.—Of the Liberal party, several leaders were lost at this time. Sir Henry Parnell, become Lord Congleton, who did as much as a member of parliament well could do towards financial reform, died by his own hand in a state of nervous disease, in 1842. He was secretary-at-war in the early days of Lord Grey's administration; but he did not like the financial proceedings of the Whigs, and he resigned in a few months—a measure absolutely necessary, if he objected to Lord Althorp's projects being attributed to his own principles. As we have before seen, he disclaimed all participation in Lord Althorp's budgets; and it was necessary that he should resign, to do this. Under Lord Melbourne, he was paymaster of the forces. As a leading member of the Excise commission, he rendered important service. Lord Congleton had nearly completed his sixty-sixth year at the time of his unhappy death. His place in the

House of Lords remains unoccupied, his son and heir being a member of the community of Plymouth Brethren.

The stanch old Liberal, Alderman Wood, of late Sir Matthew Wood, so well remembered as the brave host of Queen Caroline, at the most critical turn of her fortunes, died in a good old age, in 1843.—And in the next year the once famous Radical, Sir Francis Burdett. He was no longer a Radical; and it was a misfortune to the Liberal cause that he had ever been one. He was a weak and vain man—fond of notoriety and scenes, capable of going to prison for libel amidst popular sympathy, and of being found teaching his son to read Magna Charta, when called on by the officers of justice on that errand; but he was not capable of the silent self-denial, the long perseverance, the patient labour and good-temper, necessary to the support and furtherance of the cause in adverse times, and up to the moment of success. He fell back; and, falling back, was rejected by Westminster in 1837; and from that time, he became an avowed Conservative, sitting for North Wiltshire on that interest. He had many requisites for popularity, and he long enjoyed it; but it did not cheer the end of his life, for the mode of his political change was not one which could be regarded with respect by either old or new allies. He died a few days after his wife, in January 1844, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.—Sir R. Peel's attorney-general, Sir William W. Follett, a man who wanted only health to have raised him to the highest legal and political honours, died in office in 1845—the ministers attending his funeral. He was only forty-six.—One of the heroes of our late Indian wars, Major-general Sir William Nott, died very soon after attaining the honours and rewards assigned him for his share in redeeming the disgrace of the Afghan war. The queen gave him honours; parliament voted him thanks; and the East India Company presented him with £1000 a year for his life. He returned ill in health; and it is supposed that the excitement of his welcome, especially in his native town of Carmarthen, was too much for him; for he presently sank under disease of the heart. He had reached his sixty-third year.

A few centuries earlier, Sir Robert Ker Porter would

have been a hero of romance; and, as it was, his history has more of the heroic and romantic about it than we look for in our time. His destiny seems to have been determined by no less romantic a person than Flora Macdonald, who fixed his attention on a battle-piece in her house, and explained to him that it was one of the battles of 1745. He was made to be a painter; and this incident, occurring when he was only nine or ten years old, made him the painter of that picture, the 'Storming of Seringapatam,' which set all artists wondering what lot could be in store for the youth who, at nineteen, could achieve such a work in less time than most men would require to plan it. The picture was destroyed in a fire; but the sketches remained; and many other battle-pieces by the same hand. Young Porter spent much of his life in Russia, and married a Russian princess. He travelled over the most interesting parts of Asia, and made the world the wiser for what he saw. He was next painting sacred subjects for altar-pieces at Venezuela, where he was British consul; and, after seeing what he could of South America, he died at last at St. Petersburg, of apoplexy brought on by the Russian cold, after the heats of Venezuela. He was the brother of the novelists, Jane and Anna Maria Porter. His death took place on the 4th of May 1842, in the sixty-third year of his age.

Lord Elgin, who gave us the marbles in the British Museum, died in 1841. While our ambassador at the Porte, he employed his time and efforts in securing Greek sculptures and medals, in obtaining plans, measurements and elevations of buildings, moulds and casts; and in 1816 the House of Commons decided to purchase the Elgin marbles for £35,000. Lord Elgin lived to be seventy-four, and to see something of the benefit the nation derived from his labours in Greece. Many natural regrets have been expressed by travellers at the removal of the sculptures from their own place; but subsequent events have made it clear that, if they had not been secured, nothing but their fragments would have been left by this time. Their removal has made the Greek wars of recent years one degree less disastrous.

It is a well-known anecdote of Nollekens, that when, in

the exhibition of 1806, his eye fell on a bust sent in by a novice, he said: 'It is a splendid work. Let the man be known. Remove one of my busts, and put this in its place.' The man was Chantrey—then twenty-four years old. From that time he was abundantly known, and uniformly successful. He never had any struggles against fortune to tell of, his only cross in life being that his father had wished to make him an attorney when he desired to be 'a carver.' The two works by which he is perhaps best known, the statue of Lady Louisa Russell, and the Sleeping Children in Lichfield Cathedral, were from designs by Stothard. He had not poetic faculty for such designs; but he excelled in monumental sculpture of a simply grave order—as his statues of Watt, and Horner, and Canning, and many more, are proofs. Having no near relations, Chantrey left the reversion of his property, after its use by his widow, for the encouragement of art in Great Britain. When he was building a mausoleum for himself, he said to his friend and assistant, Allan Cunningham, that it should be made large enough to hold them both; but Allan had no mind for this. 'No,' said he, 'I should not like, even when I am dead, to be so shut up. I would far rather rest where the daisies would grow over my head.' They departed within a year of each other, Chantrey going first, and leaving a generous provision for Cunningham—to whose poetical mind he owed more than even to his zealous attachment. Chantrey died suddenly, of heart-disease, on the 25th of November 1841; and Cunningham on the 5th of the next November. The sculptor was fifty-nine years of age; the poet, fifty-six. It is as a poet, and especially as a song-writer, that Allan Cunningham's name will live. He attempted various walks of literature, and is well known by his *Lives of British Painters;* but his fame rests more securely on his ballads and songs. We shall not forget 'It's hame and it's hame;' or, 'A wet sheet and a flowing sea.' There was a great sweep among the painters during this period. Hofland, the landscape-painter, was husband to the Mrs. Hofland whose tales for children were so unboundedly popular for some time after their appearance. The Edgeworths testified to their great value in Ireland;

and Queen Charlotte patronised them in England. The husband, too, was favoured by the old king; yet the Hoflands suffered cruelly from embarrassments, caused by an unfortunate contract with the Duke of Marlborough, the heavy expenses of which fell, not on the peer, but the artist. Both worked hard, as long as years and health would allow—the husband in teaching as well as painting, and the wife in literature and in domestic cares. Mr. Hofland died in January 1843, and his wife in November 1844.—In 1844, we lost the aged Nicholson, one of the founders of the Society of Painters in Water-colours, whose last effort, when dying at the age of ninety-one, was to have himself lifted up, to brighten a dark cloud in a picture of a shipwreck; and Geddes, the portrait-painter and associate of the Royal Academy, best known, perhaps, by his picture of the 'Discovery of the Regalia of Scotland,' with a portrait of Scott; and Grieve, the first scene-painter of his time, who raised that kind of work into a department of art; and, to the regret of all England, Callcott, the respected and beloved. He was early destined to music, with and by his elder brother; but he turned to painting; and, at first, to portraits, under the teaching of Hoppner. After 1803, however, he devoted himself to landscape-painting, and earned the title of the English Claude. He married the well-known writer, Maria Graham, whose health was undermined before this second marriage. His devoted watching over her destroyed his health, and impaired in proportion his professional efforts; and when she died, in 1842, he was more like a man of eighty than of sixty-three; and he was no longer able to paint. In 1844, the queen made him conservator of the royal pictures; an office which was valuable to him, not only for its honour and profit, but because it afforded him occupation and interest which were not too great for his strength. Up to the last week of his life he exerted himself to complete an improved catalogue of the queen's pictures, and then died, on the 23rd of November, after a decline of at least six years. His serene expanses, wide horizons, melting distances, rippling waters, and lucid Dutch river-scenes will always refresh and gratify the eye, through all changes of taste in art.

The year 1845 was a sad one too. In January died the aged painter Smirke, the father of the two architects of well-known name, and a Royal Academician from the year of Sir Joshua Reynolds's death, 1792; and Phillips, also a Royal Academician, and one of the most eminent of English portrait-painters. He succeeded Fuseli, in 1824, in the professorship of painting in the Royal Academy, delivering ten lectures which have a good reputation; and he wrote a good deal on painting in Rees's *Cyclopædia;* but his fame rests on his portraits. He established something better than fame in the hearts of brother-artists, and of all who know what he did for the protection and benefit of the profession.—In the same year died, aged only thirty-three, a man from whom great things were hoped—William John Müller, a landscape and costume painter of high excellence. He followed his art into the wildest recesses of Greece, and high up towards the sources of the Nile. At a great sacrifice of connection, money, and time, he accompanied, at his own request, Sir Charles Fellows's last expedition to Lycia, and brought back sketches of extraordinary value, which sold for above £4000 after his death. Some pictures, from which he hoped everything that could compensate him for his sacrifices, were so hung in the exhibition of 1845 as to be unnoticed. The disappointment preyed on his mind, and prostrated his strength. Whether disease had before fixed itself fatally in his frame, there is no saying now; but he pined and sank, dying of enlargement of the heart, on the 8th of September following his disappointment.—A sadder event than even this gave a shock to the whole nation, a few months afterwards. In June 1846, our historical painter, Haydon, destroyed himself, in anguish under poverty and mortification. He was a man of temperate habits, but incapable of prudence and skill in the management of affairs. He was in debt almost all his life; and he discouraged his patrons by making his pictures too large to be hung, and by other perversities which another kind of man would have avoided, without injury to his artistical aim. It is not difficult to account for his misfortunes; but there is no one who does not deeply mourn them. There is no one who cannot feel what must have been the anguish of a man so sensitive

when no commissions came in, when his exhibition in April so failed as that only four persons came the first day, while crowds were struggling for entrance to see Tom Thumb. 'How different it would have been twenty-six years ago!' he wrote in his diary. He became grave and silent in his family, and superstitious in his entries in his diary. In one week, he noted down the visitors to his exhibition as 133½, while 12,000 went to see Tom Thumb—not asking himself, unhappily, how few of the 12,000 he would have cared to see in his room. On the 16th of June, he wrote to the prime-minister and two others, stating that he had a heavy sum to pay. 'Tormented by Disraeli, harassed by public business,' as the grateful artist wrote, 'Sir R. Peel was the only one who replied;' and the reply was instant and kind, enclosing £50. Six days afterwards, occurs the last entry—Lear's words, 'Stretch me no longer on this rough world;' and before the ink was dry, the overwrought sufferer had shot himself. His family were taken immediate care of by the queen, the minister, and the friends of art and artists. Haydon did what he could to raise the ideal and practice of historical painting in England. He lectured, and wrote, and taught, and discoursed. But he was not one who could be made secure and happy by anything that he could do for art, or anything that men could do for him, in a state of society like our own. If he could ever have fitted any time, it was certainly not our own. He saw historical painting more likely to thrive in England than ever before, and knew that it was partly by his own efforts; yet there seemed no room for hope that any picture of his would appear on the walls of the new Houses of Parliament. The Fine Arts Commission took no notice of him; and when, by opening his exhibition, he invited the public to judge his claims, the public took no heed, and his heart was broken. His most appreciated work appears to have been 'Christ entering Jerusalem,' which he exhibited in 1820. Another which, through the engraving, roused a wide popular sympathy, was 'Napoleon at St. Helena.' Benjamin Robert Haydon was sixty years old.—Of musicians, there died during the period, Joseph Count Mazzinghi, at the age of eighty, who had actually been chosen director

at the Opera-house at the age of nineteen, and who continued a popular composer during his long life; and of actors, the great laugh-maker, Liston. Of all things in the world, Liston was, first, usher in a school; and when he took a fancy for the stage, it was for tragedy. Nevertheless, it was reserved for him to make £100 per week in comedy; and to make it fairly, for, while he was yet receiving only £60 per week, as Paul Pry, the manager cleared £7000 in the season. In the provinces, he often received from £250 to £350 per week; an indication of the English being a laughter-loving people, after all that can be said of their tendency to solicitude and solemnity. Liston was truly an artist, amidst all his licence to take liberties with the public mirth. He studied his most grotesque characters as carefully as if they had been tragic. He was a man of domestic habits and irreproachable character; and he reached the age of sixty-nine amidst the serious respect of his friends, as well as the delight of a laughing nation. He died in March 1846, in the seventieth year of his age.—Mr. Loudon's name seems to belong to the list of artists, so artistically did he instruct the public taste in gardening, planting, and rural architecture. He was a native of Lanarkshire, and came to England in 1803, to practise as a landscape-gardener, when he was only twenty years old. He travelled abroad to obtain information, and on his return published one after another of that long series of works, of which the *Encyclopædia of Gardening* is best known; and next to that, perhaps, his *Encyclopædia of Cottage, Farm, and Village Architecture.* One of his great works, the *Arboretum Britannicum*, involved him in difficulties which he wore himself out to surmount. His sufferings of body were of the severest kind; but his energy of mind was indomitable. His spirit of enthusiasm must have lightened and sweetened his life more than any pecuniary prosperity could have done. Among his achievements, one of the best known is the laying out of the Derby Arboretum—the great garden presented to the people of Derby by their generous townsman, Mr. Joseph Strutt. Mr. Loudon was fifty years old when he died, in December 1843.

In 1842 occurred one of the greatest losses to the scientific world that the century has to show. But that vast

discoveries become more common with every century, ours would be as much signalised by the fame of Sir Charles Bell, as the seventeenth is by that of Harvey. Harvey proved the circulation of the blood, and was believed by no physician in Europe who was above forty at the time of his death. Sir Charles Bell discovered the diversities which exist in the structure and functions of the nerves; and his demonstrations of the facts were so clear, and the consciousness of ignorance has so far extended in our more enlightened age, that the only dispute which occurred was as to who ought to appropriate the honour of the discovery. It is settled, past all controversy, that the honour belongs to Sir Charles Bell. He has pointed out to us that we have, bound up in the same sheath, nerves of sensation and nerves of motion, and, as he believed, nerves for other functions also; and it would be a bold thing to say that any discovery in connection with our mysterious human frame was ever more important in itself, or more fraught with future significance. Sir Charles Bell did many more things during his active and devoted life; but it is this which gives him a high place in the history of his country. He was the youngest of the four eminent brothers Bell—Robert, the Edinburgh lawyer; the great surgeon, John; and George Joseph, the law-professor in Edinburgh University, being his elder brothers. Sir Charles Bell died suddenly, but not to the surprise of his friends, of *angina pectoris*—a disease of some standing—on the 27th of May 1842, aged sixty-eight. He was knighted by William IV. on his accession, together with Herschel, Brewster, Ivory, and other men of science. His private life was simple, serene, and happy; but he suffered much anxiety of mind about professional matters, and latterly especially about the relation of his profession to the law; and these anxieties are believed to have hastened his death.—It was a disease of the heart which, in the next year, carried off Mr. Kemp, the chemical lecturer in the Edinburgh University, who laid the world under obligations to him before his departure at the age of thirty-six. It was he who introduced amalgamated zinc plates into galvanic batteries. 'Let us never forget,' wrote an eminent man after his death, 'to whom we owe this discovery, which of itself

enables galvanic batteries to be used in the arts. Ages to come will, perhaps, have to thank the inventor, whom we are too apt to forget; yet the obligation from the public to Mr. Kemp is the same.' He distinguished himself before the British Association at Edinburgh, in 1834, by his display of the results of his bold investigations. He died in December 1843.—In August 1844, died the president of the Astronomical Society, Mr. Francis Baily. He left the Stock Exchange, where he had made an ample fortune, in 1825, and devoted himself to philosophical pursuits for the rest of his life—nearly twenty years. He organised the Astronomical Society; improved the *Nautical Almanac;* stimulated the new series of pendulum experiments which exposed so many reasons for new care; aided the commission of weights and measures; aided the Astronomical Catalogue of the British Association; gave to the world the correspondence and catalogues of Flamsteed; and wrote the best treatise that exists on life-annuities and insurance. It is a pleasure to record such instances as these of the use which English men of business make of their wealth and leisure, when they have had enough of money-getting, and have preserved a taste for higher things.—An aged man died in the same summer, whose name will never be lost from the records of science—Dr. Dalton. Dalton was an usher in north-country schools till he was seven-and-twenty, when he was recommended to the chair of mathematics and natural philosophy at the New College, Manchester. This was in 1793; and at Manchester he lived for the rest of his days, dying there in July 1844, in the seventy-eighth year of his age. He saw Paris, and went to London occasionally, and was everywhere received with honour; for his discoveries were known all over the world; and it was pure pleasure to pay homage to one so simple and benign. His body lay in state in the Town-hall of Manchester, and was visited by more than 40,000 persons in one day. His atomic theory, the discovery of which he entered upon in 1803, is considered, at present, probably the most important contribution ever made to chemistry. Dr. Thomas Thomson first understood and made known the scope of it; Wollaston instantly apprehended it; and Davy followed, after an interval of resistance and ridicule.

By the application of mathematics to chemistry, and Dalton's subsequent efforts to bring chemical analysis nearer to a chance of correctness, the knowledge of chemical combinations has been marvellously simplified, and the processes of chemical analysis have been raised from a looseness too like hap-hazard to something approaching to mathematical precision. Such precision extends from scientific discovery to the arts of life; and manufacturers are benefited at the same time with the experiments of the laboratory. This discovery of Dalton's is sometimes called by the name he chose—the atomic theory; sometimes by Wollaston's—the theory of chemical equivalents; sometimes by Davy's—the theory of chemical proportions; but under every name, the laws of relative proportion laid down by Dalton are confirmed by every improvement in the practice of chemical analysis. He has been called the legislator of his science, which was before merely empirical. He was framed for scientific despotism, by his sagacity, his simplicity, and his self-reliance. He was a Quaker; and no member of his sect led a life more regular and innocent—without austerity, dulness, vanity, or spiritual pride. In face he was like Newton; and, like Newton, he was never married. He did not overwork his brain. His brain was strong, and his nervous system good; and he recreated himself with a game at bowls every Thursday, and with a sight of his native Cumberland mountains every summer. Long before his death, he was a member of almost every royal academy and scientific institute in Europe.

Among the literary men who died during this period, the most difficult to class is Theodore E. Hook, so various in character are his works. He began with the drama, and gave several comedies and farces to the stage before he was twenty-three. Then he turned to novel-writing; and then, as editor of the *John Bull*, to politics, or what he called such. Then he wrote novels again, and biography; his lives of Kelly and of Sir David Baird, and his *Sayings and Doings*, *Love and Pride*, and *Gilbert Gurney*, being perhaps the best known of his later works. Theodore Hook's life was a merry, but not a happy one. He was disgraced through carelessness in his office of accountant-

general at the Mauritius, by which there was a deficiency in the treasury. He made enemies on every hand by the libellous tone of his newspaper; and he was perpetually overwrought by toil while wasting his resources of purse, health, and time, in dissipation. He was, however, the leading wit of his time in the old-fashioned method of London dissipation; and in his career we seem to see revived, with little alteration, the raking poor author of each former century. Theodore Hook was only fifty-two when he died, in August 1841.—Maturin, an Irish clergyman, who wrote two novels in a Byronic style which became popular—*Bertram* and *Melmoth the Wanderer*—died in 1842; and in the same year, died another Irish novelist of far higher merit, John Banim, author of the *O'Hara Tales*, *The Boyne Water*, *Father Connell*, and others. It was Banim who first opened up those aspects of Irish life which have since been exhibited by Carleton, Griffin, and others, and which are as unlike the pictures of the Edgeworths and the Morgans as Fielding is unlike Richardson. The tragedy of humble life was Banim's department, and he wrought in it with great power. He had himself but too much experience of the tragic side of human life. He attempted editorship at seventeen years old, married at twenty, suffered from sickness and poverty for many years—a poverty which seemed scarcely reduced by a pension granted him in 1837—and died in his forty-second year.—Captain Hamilton ranks among the novelists for his *Cyril Thornton;* but he is no less known by his contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine*, and his *Men and Manners in America*. He was a soldier, filling up his leisure after the peace with literary occupation. His works show a highly trained ability; and his calm temper and judgment, and admirable manners, appearing through his writings to those who never saw his face, gave a weight to what he said, which is sometimes desired in vain by men of greater power.—In curious companionship with the poor novelists of the time, the Hooks, and Banims, and Hoods, we find Mr. Beckford's name—the Wm. Beckford who was born to £100,000 a year. His true monument is his novel, *Vathek*, though he spent enormous amounts of money in building his wonderful edifice of Fonthill. His great tower, 300

feet high, fell down, was rebuilt, and fell again; but *Vathek* remains. The nine days' wonder of Mr. Beckford's eccentricities and the Fonthill sale has long been forgotten; but the vivacity and power of his *Letters on Italy, Spain, and Portugal*, are as keen as ever. Mr. Beckford was the son and heir of the Alderman Beckford whose celebrated extempore speech to George III. is engraved on his monument in Guildhall. The production of *Vathek* seems to have been an instance of impromptu ability quite as remarkable. Mr. Beckford used to declare that it was written at one sitting—that is, in three days and two nights, during which he never took off his clothes. It was written in French, and afterwards translated without his knowledge, and with little skill. Byron used to think it the best attempt at the oriental style of fiction ever made by a European. It appeared first at Lausanne, in 1784. This carries us very far back; but Mr. Beckford was then twenty-four years of age. He lived sixty years longer, dying at Bath in May 1844.—Thomas Hood, the author of *Tylney Hall*, was classed among the novelists on that account; but he belongs to other departments too. He was a wit, as every page of every one of his writings may show; and we have the *Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*, and *Eugene Aram's Dream*, and the *Song of the Shirt*, to prove him a poet. He was an editor of annuals and of magazines; but our interest in him is from the remarkable union, in his genius, of wit, sense, and pathos. It is true that we never see real wit apart from sound sense, and rarely from pathos; but in Hood, all so abounded together, and in the strictest union, as to give almost an impression of a fresh order of genius. He was one of the sufferers of his order—a sufferer from sickness and poverty; and he was in the depths of these troubles when he had cause, like poor Haydon, to wonder how the prime-minister, in the midst of harassing cares and a load of business, could attend to his interests, and consult his feelings with all the nicety of leisure. The letter of Sir R. Peel to Hood, announcing the grant of a pension, remains one of the chief honours of the great statesman. Poor Hood died soon after; the pension was granted to his widow; and in a few months she also died. The children were taken

care of, as it was indispensable to the conscience of society that they should be, for their father was truly a social benefactor. He was always on the right side in matters of morals and of feeling—full of faith in good, and sympathy in all that was generous and true. His satire was directed upon whatever was foul, false, and selfish. He was forty-seven when he died, in May 1845.

In the same year, a few weeks earlier, died untimely a man who was held in warm regard by his friends, and in respect by those of the public who knew what his services were—Laman Blanchard, who edited, in his time, three newspapers, and the *Monthly Magazine*, and contributed largely to periodicals. His consistent and enlightened political opinions and conduct were of service to the public morality of his time; and his early loss was deplored for other reasons than the sadness of the mode in which it happened. The illness and death of his wife had so worn him that brain-seizures came on; and after one of these, in a state of nervous prostration, he destroyed himself. His orphans, too, found protection from society.—Under the date 1817, our history has exhibited the narrative and indicated the effects of the trials of William Hone for blasphemy and libel. It was pointed out that we owe to those trials the vast improvement in our libel-law, and in its application. William Hone wrought well in literature after those days, giving us the volumes that Southey and other men of curious knowledge have praised so highly—the *Every-day Book*, the *Table Book*, and the *Year Book*. Mr. Hone was in his sixty-fourth year when he died in 1842.—In the same year we lost Robert Mudie, whose works on natural history are true poems. He was a self-educated Scotchman; and when he wrote about things that he understood, as in his *Feathered Tribes of the British Islands*, he plunged his readers into the depths of nature as the true poet alone can do. He is another example, as White of Selborne and Audubon were before him, of the indissoluble connection between a nice and appreciative observation of nature and the kindling of a spirit of poetry.

Perhaps the most successful essayist of his time was the Rev. John Foster, last of Bristol. His *Essays* passed through eighteen editions during his life; and they are

still spreading. There is no great precision in the thoughts; but the tone of morality is pure, and the views are original and broad, while the style is eminently interesting. The volume was one which met the wants of the time; and if some of the matter is vague, and the views narrow, they were a welcome escape from the shallow prosings which they superseded. Mr. Foster published one other volume—on *The Evils of Popular Ignorance*, and a mass of contributions to the *Eclectic Review*. He died in 1843, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.—Henry Nelson Coleridge, nephew of the poet, and editor of his *Literary Remains*, died in middle age, in 1843. He published an *Introduction to the Study of the Greek Classic Poets;* but he is more widely known by a whimsical volume, full of beauty of description—*Six Months in the West Indies.*

The year after, in February 1844, died a Mr. John Wright, who would have remained obscure, in spite of much literary effort, but for his sagacity and industry in regard to a single enterprise. The thirteenth parliament of Great Britain is commonly called the unreported parliament; but was saved from being wholly dumb to a future generation by Sir Henry Cavendish having diligently reported its debates to the best of his ability. Sir Henry Cavendish's notes, written in short-hand, were found among the Bridgewater manuscripts in the British Museum; and Mr. Wright made the key to the short-hand, transcribed the debates, and was printing them, with illustrations of the parliamentary proceedings of the time, when the useful work was stopped by his death, at the age of seventy-three. —Henry F. Cary, the translator of Dante, and also of *The Birds* of Aristophanes, and of Pindar's *Odes*, died in 1844. His Dante was little noticed till Coleridge made it known; after which it remained the standard translation. Dr. Cary was a most industrious man of letters, both in his office of assistant-librarian at the British Museum, and in his favourite labour of editing our native poets and writing their lives, in continuation of Johnson's biographies.

The poets Southey and Campbell died during this period; men as opposite in their natures and modes of living as poets can be conceived to be. It will probably be undisputed

that Campbell was the greater poet, and Southey the nobler man. While our language lasts, Campbell's lyrics will make music in it. While Great Britain has mariners, his *Mariners of England* will kindle a glow in the nation's heart; and scores of lines from his most successful poem, the *Pleasures of Hope*, have become so hackneyed that few people, on hearing them, know where they come from, or fail to suppose they must be Shakspeare's. He was known all over the world as the author of the *Pleasures of Hope;* and used to complain of it as the introduction to every act of his social life. He could not be born as the author of the *Pleasures of Hope;* but he was so announced on his marriage, on his travels, on his introduction to great personages, on every reappearance before the world as an author; and a friend who had heard him thus complain, tells us that it was with a sort of mournful amusement that, looking into the grave in Westminster Abbey at the last moment, he saw on the coffin-plate, Thomas Campbell, author of the *Pleasures of Hope*, &c. &c. Campbell's own favourite among his poems was *Gertrude of Wyoming;* but, well as the public liked it, his fame still rested on his earlier productions. Campbell's constitution and temperament were not favourable to the conditions of a happy life. He sometimes enjoyed greatly—he often suffered bitterly; and he was unable to merge his self-regards either in sustained industry or in the interests of others. With many generous impulses, and strong claims to respect in his relations of son and brother, he was not a serene or happy man. After a life of strong excitements and conflicting sensibilities, he died on the 15th of June 1844, at Boulogne, where he had settled a year before. He was in his sixty-eighth year. His funeral in Westminster Abbey was attended with all the pomp which could mark the national gratitude to a great poet.—Very unlike this was Southey's genius and Southey's career. His life was one of purity and virtue almost austere. His domestic affections were warm; his domestic temper venerable and sweet; his self-denial and benevolence for the sake of the erring and the helpless were a life-long protest against the injurious laxity which enters into our estimate of the morals of genius. He was eminently happy in his life-

long toils. He loved labour for itself, and he loved the subjects on which he toiled; and his conscience, nice as it was, could not but be satisfied and gratified at the spectacle of the aid and solace which, by his labours, he was able to give beyond his own family, to some who had no natural claim on him for support. In the spectacle of his social and domestic virtues, all remembrance of a bitter political and religious spirit may well be sunk. He was not a man qualified to have opinions, strictly so called. He could not sympathise in any views but those immediately held by himself; and the views which he most quarrelled with were usually those which had been, no long time before, virulently held by himself. He wrote a vast quantity, and never with carelessness or haste. Of his poems, *Thalaba* is, no doubt, the greatest blessing to his most youthful readers, to whom its pure sweetness of morals and oriental imagery are most attractive; and *Roderick* is perhaps decided to be of the highest order. He was a graceful essayist and critic, as is shown in his contributions to the *Quarterly Review;* a spirited biographer, as his popular *Life of Nelson* may show; and a painstaking and elegant historian, as we see in his *History of the Peninsular War.* His essays and histories were vitally injured by his imperfections as a thinker, and his tendency to prejudice and intellectual passion; but he was always earnest and sincere—always kindly in act when most intolerant in thought. He suffered bitterly from the illness and death of his first wife; and so bitterly as never to recover his power of mind. He formed a second marriage while already sinking in health; and became lost in mind, through pressure on the brain, three years before his death, which took place on the 21st of March 1843. He had been poet-laureate since 1813, and was succeeded in the office by Mr. Wordsworth, who holds it now.—Before quitting the review of the literary men who died during the period before us, we must name with them the publisher who was the friend of all literary men. John Murray, the prince of publishers, introduced Scott and Byron to each other's acquaintance; and Southey and Crabbe; and Scott and Wilkie. He was a man of a noble heart in regard to literature and authors; and happily, a noble prosperity

enabled him to gratify his generous dispositions. His pride was in giving great gifts of literature to the world, and of solace to their authors. It was he who presented us with the *Quarterly Review*, and most of the greatest works of the greatest men during the present century; for he began business when he came of age in 1799, and carried it on in full vigour till his death in 1843. His first highly successful enterprise was Mrs. Rundell's *Cookery Book;* and the next the *Quarterly Review*, which he set up in 1809, and which remains the property of his house. When, in after-times, men read of the generous and enlightened publishers who first succeeded to the patrons of authors, it will not be forgotten that our age had a John Murray.

Of other benefactors of the century, we find that Dr. Birkbeck, the founder of mechanics' institutes, died in 1841, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. When the departure of this excellent man was known, there was sorrow over all the land where the working-men met for self and mutual instruction.—Another eminent friend of popular enlightenment was William Allen, who aided in founding the British and Foreign School Society, and in seeing what could be done by the Lancasterian schools. He was also one of the most active of the indefatigable abolitionists, and aided first in the extinction of the British slave-trade, and then in the overthrow of colonial slavery. He was a man of science, too, the friend of Davy, and for many years lecturer on chemistry and natural philosophy at Guy's Hospital and the Royal Institution. After a life of varied good works, the enlightened and benevolent William Allen, whom the Friends had the honour of including in their sect, died in the seventy-fourth year of his age, at the close of 1843.—Two of his friends and fellow-labourers soon followed him—Mrs. Fry in 1845, in her sixty-fifth year; and Thomas Clarkson in 1846, in the eighty-sixth year of his age. If it be true, as we are wont to say, that the distinctive social effect of Christianity is its inducing the care of the helpless who were before left to perish, the existence of such persons as these three—Allen, Clarkson, and Mrs. Fry—at one time, and in close companionship, marks our age as a Christian one, after all its drawbacks.

The ignorant, the guilty, and the enslaved, were the chief care in life to these friends, who might have passed their years in ease and indolence, or the gratification of merely intellectual tastes; but it suited their noble natures better to go out on the highways of the sea and land, and search through dark alleys, and disgusting prisons, and hellish slave-ships, to seek and save that which was lost. They sustained, moreover, the most irksome and dispiriting toil, the most disheartening disappointment—a long and painful probation of heart and mind—in pursuit of their objects; and they died, all faithful to the aims of their life. When Mrs. Fry entered the room in Newgate where 160 guilty and ignorant wretches were shut up, and in her serene and noble countenance brought them the hope which they had believed to be for ever shut out, she began that reform in the treatment of moral disease which, however tentative and vague at present, can never now stop short of completion. And when Clarkson sat down, his heart throbbing with his new knowledge of the wrongs of the negro, and resolved to devote his life to the redemption of that helpless race, the greatest step was taken ever known to have been taken by any man for the assertion and establishment of human rights. And Clarkson was not one to forsake an aim. He lived for the cause to the very last, and drew in others to live for it. Mistakes were made by his coadjutors and himself; for, in enterprises so new and vast, the agents have to learn as they go; but the national conscience was roused, the principles of human liberty were asserted, the national testimony was transferred to the side of right, and the emancipation of all races of men was made a question merely of time. As it was Clarkson who began, and who stimulated Wilberfore and all other good men to carry on the work, whom could we place higher than Clarkson on our list of benefactors? Wilberforce and all other good men assigned him the first place; and there he remains, and will remain.

A Roman Catholic lady, well educated, and deeply impressed with the advantages of education, was living in the neighbourhood of London during the whole of the period of our history, watching the results of the efforts made by Lord Brougham and others for the extension and improve-

ment of education in England. Her name was Flaherty. She was not rich; but she was unmarried, and free to live as she chose, and dispose of her income as she would. She chose to live frugally, and to ride in an omnibus instead of a better carriage, that she might have means to aid the extension of education. In 1836, she presented to the council of University College, the sum of £5000 in the 3½ per cents., out of which scholarships have been founded. This lady has shown us that there is nothing in our modern civilisation—our omnibuses and unsectarian schools—which can preclude the antique spirit and practice of love and good works; and in this the admirable Mary Flaherty has perhaps left us as true a benefit as in the scholarships which bear her name. She died in 1845, aged eighty-four.

The creation of wealth, and consequently of human life, by means of the cotton manufacture, is pointed out as one of the leading social events of the last century. It is reckoned that the cotton manufacture has added permanently 2,000,000 to our population. Something analogous, on a smaller, but still on a great scale, has been effected in our own time by the agricultural improvements of one man—Mr. Coke, of Norfolk, who died Earl of Leicester. By the simple and virtuous method of devoting his mind and life to the improvement of the land, Mr. Coke caused a vast permanent increase of wealth, and therefore of labour and subsistence, and therefore of human life. In a single village, where he found 162 inhabitants when he entered on his property, he left 1000; and for many miles round, a country before poor and almost barren was left by him fruitful and well-peopled. He found his own rental increased from £2200 to above £20,000; but that was of small account in his eyes in comparison with the stimulus given to agricultural improvement by his example. The Holkham sheep-shearing, at which Mr. Coke annually entertained 300 guests for several days, roused a fine spirit among the landed proprietors of England and the farmers of Norfolk, and caused Mr. Coke to be looked upon as one of the chief social benefactors of his time. While in the House of Commons, he was a sturdy Liberal. When the Reform Bill passed, he thought he might be spared from

the political world, aged as he then was. He was always called 'the first commoner of England;' but, in 1837, when eighty-five years of age, he was made Earl of Leicester. He reached the age of ninety, dying in June 1842.—There were benefactors of Mrs. Flaherty's order in the cause of agricultural improvements during this period. Dr. Swiney, resident in Camden Town, an eccentric gentleman in some respects, did an act of sober goodness in leaving £5000 to the trustees of the British Museum, for the establishment of a lectureship on geology; and another £5000 to the Society of Arts, to provide, once in every five years, 100 guineas, to be presented, in a goblet of equal value, to the British freeholder who should reclaim the largest extent of waste lands. Dr. Swiney died in 1844.—In 1846 died Mr. Peter Purcell of Dublin, who was mainly instrumental in forming the Royal Agricultural Improvement Society, and who did in Ireland, on a smaller scale, what Mr. Coke was doing in England. He became wealthy through the improvement of land—caring less for his wealth for its own sake, than as a proof open to all eyes of the direction in which the welfare of Ireland lay. He withdrew from politics, in which he had once been as much involved as any man, and engaged as many of his neighbours as he could in the interests of improved husbandry. More and more labourers were employed; the political temper of his neighbours improved; he grew wealthy; and when he was gone, all men saw what a benefactor he had been.—When Mr. Coke was called the first commoner of England, the Marquis of Westminster was believed to be 'the richest subject in the empire.' His importance in our eyes arises, not from the amount of his wealth, but from the mode in which its increase was provided for during this period. The Pimlico estate, before considered a vast property, now has upon it the new squares of Belgrave and Eaton, with Eccleston Street, Wilton Place, and all the new city of palaces which foreigners now look upon as one of the marvels of London. The ultimate rental of this district is scarcely calculable. The Marquis of Westminster had besides a noble library, including a mass of valuable ancient manuscripts, and one of the finest picture-galleries in the kingdom, which was liberally opened to the public.

The Marquis of Westminster was a steady Whig for the last forty years of his life, after having entered the political world under the auspices of Mr. Pitt. He was raised from his earldom to his marquisate by William IV. But among all of either title by whom he was preceded or may be followed, he will ever be distinguished by his creations on his Pimlico estate.

Throughout our history, some grateful mention has been made of the benefactors that society has lost during our period of thirty years. It is unnatural to conclude without some grateful mention of those who remained among us at the close of the period. Yet how little can be said while they yet live! How presumptuous it seems to suppose that we can estimate their influence on society, or set forth what they have done! It is only with regard to a very few that even a word can yet be ventured—a few whose social influence was as unquestionable in 1846 as it can ever be to another generation. To a future generation must be left the duty and privilege of honouring a hundred more. We have seen something of what railways are likely to do in changing and advancing our civilisation. It is to the greatest of our engineers, George Stephenson, who was living at the expiration of this period, that this change is owing, more than to any other man. His achievement lies, too, exactly within our period; for it was in 1816 that Mr. Stephenson took out a patent, in conjunction with Mr. Dodd and Mr. Losh, under which locomotives were set forth upon colliery railways near Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Between that date and the close of our history, Mr. Stephenson's plans and works have spread over the land till there is probably hardly an individual in the kingdom whose existence is not in some way affected by what has been done.—Then, we have, instead of the cathedral of old, a palace of national council, which is the truest and fittest direction for the spirit of architecture to take in our age, and under our political constitution; and Mr. Barry is our architect. In our splendid Houses of Parliament he has built his own monument; and if, as one of the arts of peace, architecture has risen and improved during the period, Mr. Barry has been, by many other works

scattered through our towns, the chief educator of the public taste.—In a widely different department of training, we have had a guide whose name should be remembered by the countrymen of Shakspeare. Mr. Macready has led the nation back again from some foolish wanderings to the real Shakspeare. The Kembles presented the chief characters of Shakspeare with a glory which could not be surpassed; but Mr. Macready has evidenced a faith in the popular mind for which the popular heart should be grateful. He has not only presented many characters in his own person with extreme intellectual power and skill, but he has brought these immortal plays before the public eye in their integrity, and trusted to the general mind to prefer them to meaner things.—In painting we have Turner, whose life has been a plea for the study of nature instead of merely the old masters; and we have his works to show how ever new nature is, when contemplated by a mind which owes its training to art, but not its conceptions.

May it not be said that this is the service which, in another department, has been rendered us by Wordsworth? We have a great gift in his lofty eloquence, and in his vindication of all human sympathies; but it appears probable that a future generation will be most grateful to him for having brought us up out of a misleading conventionalism in poetry, to a recognition and contemplation of nature in subject and in expression. It was long before the critical world could be disabused; but the effort was met by popular sympathy, wherever it could be reached, from the beginning; and the popular sympathy long ago rose above all the opposition of an outworn criticism.—It was before our period that Joanna Baillie wrote the plays which turned the heads of the reading world; but she is among us still, more honoured than ever, if less worshipped.—And we have still her aged friend, Mr. Rogers, whose chief poem stimulated Campbell to write his *Pleasures of Hope*. The quiet, gentle beauty of Mr. Rogers's chief poem, the *Pleasures of Memory*, made its way to the general heart; and its early fame has not been obscured by other good deeds of Mr. Rogers, in the advancement of art, and in generous aid to intellectual aspirants of every class.—One poet we have of such signal and peculiar

power that his mind cannot but modify that of a future generation. The poems of Alfred Tennyson have certainly much of the beauty of a long-past time; but they have also a life so vivid, a truth so lucid, and a melody so inexhaustible, as to mark him the poet that cannot die.

John Wilson must unite the classes of poets and of essayists; for he is so entirely both that it is impossible to separate him from either. Before he was known as Christopher North, he was known as a poet; and assuredly he is much more of a poet since he has written in prose. In our periodical literature he stands alone, giving us, in the form of essays and dialogues, drama, criticism, poetry, natural history, and infinite mirth, all blended together and harmonised by a spirit of inexhaustible kindliness, which renders him truly a benefactor to an age that is held to need softening and cheering even more than expanding. If any one questions whether Sir Roger de Coverley has been a blessing to men for above a century, such a one, but no other, may doubt whether Christopher North will be a blessing to men of another time.

Among the essayists, Francis Jeffrey has ever been acknowledged supreme; and his review, though instituted long before the period of our history, must be regarded as one of the most powerful influences of the time. No one supposes the influence to have been altogether for good; or the principle of reviewing to be, on the whole, defensible—as authors must generally be better informed on the subjects they write on than their self-constituted judges; nor can it be said that the spirit of the *Edinburgh Review* was in its early days as generous, or at any time as earnest, as could be wished; but, with all these drawbacks, it was of eminent service in opening a wide range of subjects to middle-class readers, and in advocating liberal political principles. Francis Jeffrey's articles were the gems of the publication—full, clear, sensible, here and there deep, and always elegant; they make one wonder why the fame of the essayists of a century earlier should have so far transcended that of the best of our Edinburgh reviewers.—Of a later time is Macaulay, who began his striking series of review articles when Jeffrey was retiring amidst the well-earned honours of his old age. Rapid,

brilliant, crowded with powers and with beauties, Mr. Macaulay's *Essays* have roused and animated and gratified the minds of a multitude of readers, who would have required more than was reasonable if they had asked also for soundness of inference, completeness of statement, and repose of manner. Mr. Macaulay's influence as a historian is for a future generation to judge of; for his efforts in that direction have been entered upon since the close of our thirty years.—Another eminent essayist is Walter Savage Landor; but his exquisite writings, full of thought, fresh and deep, and of feeling sound and heroic, with the charm of antique learning spread over all, are the luxury of the few, and not even likely to leaven the mind of the many through those few.—Among the men of erudition who have made their generation the better for their learning, Mr. Hallam is prominent. His review of the *Middle Ages*, and his *History of Literature*, are among the benefits of the time; but his greatest gift is his *Constitutional History*, the value of which, with its singular impartiality and dispassionateness, may have been inestimable in a transitional political period.—One remains who must stand alone in our view, as he does in his life and his modes of thought, and in the character of his writings. Whatever place we assign him, and by whatever name we call him, Thomas Carlyle appears to be the man who has most essentially modified the mind of his time. Nothing like his mind was ever heard or dreamed of in our literature before; nothing like his mournful, grotesque, and bitterly earnest writing ever seen. Yet his writings, though widely are not universally read; and he has long wrought where his works have never appeared, and his name been barely heard. His cry of sympathetic suffering has entered into the heart of legislators; his scornful rebuke of injustice has opened the eyes of the class-blinded; his bitter ridicule of cant and factitious emotion has confounded the sectarianism and fashionable humanity of the day; and his broad and bold and incessant implication of human equality in all essential matters—if the skin be but white—has roused the clergy, and other orders of guides and instructors, to a sense of the claims of their clients. If we find, as we certainly do everywhere in our land, a nobler moral ideal in society, a

deeper sympathy, a stronger earnestness, and some partial deliverance from factitious and conventional morals and manners, it is unquestionably traceable to Carlyle. His mournful and protesting voice is heard sounding through our more serious parliamentary debates; and it is the glance of his eye that has directed other eyes to the depths of social misery and wrong. Whether we call him philosopher, poet, or moralist, he is the first teacher of our generation.

At the close of our period, Maria Edgeworth was living. She it was who early and effectually interested her century in the character and lot of the Irish; and she did much besides to raise the character of fiction, and to gratify the popular mind before Scott, and Bulwer, and Dickens occupied that field of literature. It was as the friend of little children, however, that Miss Edgeworth is most beloved, and will be most gratefully remembered. Her delectable Rosamond is worth a score of famed novel-heroes, and is surely destined to everlasting youth, with an ingenuousness that can never be sullied, and a vivacity that can never be chilled. Our restless and indefatigable Bulwer came next; and wherever English books are read his novels are found, and men and women are disputing whether they are harmless or much to be feared. His mind is evidently of so impressible and so eclectic a character, as to prevent its productions having a vital influence, and therefore it seems as if they need not be feared; while there is great value in his wonderful analyses and specimens of the mind of the time; the politic, the worldly, the sceptical, the artistical, the literary, the self-observant, the would-be philosophical—nearly all, perhaps, but the simple, the religious, or the truly philosophical. Bulwer has given us popular dramas too; and successful political pamphlets, and volumes of poems, and essays. Succeeding more or less in every walk, his best achievement, as many good judges think, is in his early series of essays republished under the title of *The Student*. However opinions may vary about the claims of particular works, there can be no doubt that Bulwer has largely occupied the mind and leisure of the public of his day.—Last and greatest among the novelists comes Charles

Dickens—the Boz who rose up in the midst of us like a jin with his magic glass among some eastern people, showing forth what was doing in the regions of darkness, and in odd places where nobody ever thought of going to look. It is scarcely conceivable that any one should, in our age of the world, exert a stronger social influence than Mr. Dickens has in his power. His sympathies are on the side of the suffering and the frail; and this makes him the idol of those who suffer, from whatever cause. We may wish that he had a sounder social philosophy, and that he could suggest a loftier moral to sufferers; could lead them to see that 'man does not live by bread alone,' and that his best happiness lies in those parts of his nature which are only animated and exalted by suffering, if it does not proceed too far; could show us something of the necessity and blessedness of homely and incessant self-discipline, and dwell a little less fondly on the grosser indulgences and commoner beneficence which are pleasant enough in their own place, but which can never make a man and society so happy as he desires them to become. We may wish for these things, and we may shrink from the exhibition of human miseries as an artistical study; but, these great drawbacks once admitted, we shall be eager to acknowledge that we have in Charles Dickens a man of a genius which cannot but mark the time, and accelerate or retard its tendencies. In as far as its tendencies are to 'consider the poor,' and to strip off the disguises of cant, he is vastly accelerating them. As to whether his delineations are true to broad daylight English life, that may be for some time to come a matter of opinion on which men will differ. That they are, one and all, true to the ideal in the author's mind, is a matter on which none differ; while the inexhaustible humour, the unbounded power of observation, the exquisite occasional pathos, and the geniality of spirit throughout, carry all readers far away from critical thoughts, and give to the author the whole range of influence, from the palace-library to the penny book-club.

It is something new in England to see a satirical periodical—a farcical exposure of the sins and follies of the time. We have one now. Some of the wits of London,

with Douglas Jerrold at their head, set up a weekly commentary on the doings of London as seen by *Punch*; and there is no corner of the kingdom to which *Punch's* criticisms have not penetrated. The work has been very useful, as well as abundantly amusing; it has had its faults and follies, and has dropped some of them; and now, its objects of satire are usually as legitimate as its satire is pungent and well-tempered. It is something that the grave English have a droll periodical to make them laugh every week; and it is something more that the laugh is not at the expense of wisdom.

In the solemn and immortal labours of the laboratory and the observatory we have Faraday and Herschel yet busy. It is not for us to speak of the secrets of nature which they are laying open; and it is not for any one to compute what they have done, or to anticipate what they may do. Of one work of Sir J. Herschel's we may form some estimate—his *Preliminary Discourse on Natural Philosophy*. That treatise is enough to make any man with a mind and heart long to devote himself to the pursuit of physical science, as the high road to wisdom, from that moment onwards. His own devotion to it is an example and inducement to all who can follow. He went to the Cape, to set up his observatory—leaving behind all considerations but that of the advancement of science; and every step of his pilgrimage has set its mark on a future age. As for Faraday, we dare say only that he is penetrating into mysteries of existence of which his own vast faculties can hardly bear the contemplation, and which will therefore become fully comprehensible only to a future generation. Under his gaze and his touch, the solid material of the universe is all melting away; matter —according to the old and now vulgar idea of it—is dissolving itself into forces; and our feeble insight into nature would be blinded, and our weak grasp of reliance would be all cast loose, but for the great truth which presents itself more clearly through all changes—that immutable law rules everywhere, all-sufficing for our intellectual support and our ease of heart. If we cannot compute what has been done by the researches and discoveries of Faraday for the period through which we have

passed, we can say nothing of how they will influence the next. We can only feel certain that, in as far as they must change the aspect of the universe, and give a new command over the conditions of organised life, they must largely affect the destiny of man, both in his intellectual progress and his social relations. It will be for the men of that future time to assign to Faraday his place in the history of his country and of his kind.

CHAPTER XVII.

National Advancement — Electric Telegraph — Sun-painting — Lord Rosse's Telescope—The Thames Tunnel—British Scientific Association—Geology—Medicine — Sanitary Improvement — Agricultural Associations—Prisons and Criminal Law—Extinction of Slavery—Education—Popular Music—Popular Art—The Educator—Methods of Charity—Duelling — Political Morality—What remains — The Labour Question.

IN taking a review of any period within our own experience, every one of us is apt to exaggerate the gains of the time —its gains in knowledge, arts, and moral views. This arises in part from our confounding change or expansion in our own ideas with change in the world about us. Therefore, we are liable to be struck by an opposite view upon occasion; and, in contemplating the best things in the old world—not its arts and science, but the wisdom of its sages, and the mental condition and communion of its people—to doubt whether, after all, the human race has got on so very much as is commonly said. If we endeavour to keep our view extended, we shall not suppose that any critical or decisive advance can have been made by any section of the human race in a period of thirty years; and we shall look without pride or vanity, it may be hoped, upon such improvements as may be recognised; while the review of such improvements may be thoroughly delightful, as convincing us of that rapid partial advance towards the grand slow general advance which we humbly but firmly trust to be the destination of the human race.

To look first to the lowest class of improvements, the arts of life—we find many of recent origin, which promote the general convenience and comfort. The electric telegraph is a marvel of the time which our minds are even yet hardly able to familarise themselves with; and yet, while amazed at what we see, we have a clear persuasion that this is but the opening of a series of discoveries and inventions. News is transmitted as by a lightning flash; messages are exchanged, police and soldiery may be summoned on an emergency, criminals are captured, scientific observations at distant points may become all but simultaneous, and there is a strengthening expectation that distant countries may communicate, not by the sea, slowly and hazardously, as hitherto, but through the sea, with the rapidity of thought. And still, when we look at the natural facts that have manifested themselves in the course of recent experiments, we are aware that much more remains to be revealed.—Then, again, we have discovered the wonderful fact of sun-painting. Not only are our portraits taken (with a harshness at present which will soon, no doubt, be softened down by art)—portraits about whose likeness there can be no dispute—but a world of toil and error is certain to be saved in coast-surveying, architectural portraiture, and delineation in natural history. Every fibre of a flower, every stone of a building, every feature of any scene, is fixed in a moment in its true proportions, to last for ever. There need no more be controversy in future centuries about the aspects of perished cities, or speculation about the faces of the illustrious dead. Each age may leave to the future a picture-gallery of its whole outer life.—Then, again, there is a telescope existing, of such power, that every rock in our side of the moon, as large as a church, is visible. We do not hear much of this marvel yet, because it is not yet so manageable as it will be; and errors derived from its use are as enormous as its powers. But it is a vast new opening into science, through which wise men are learning to look, and which may hereafter stand wide to the peasant and the child.—Of steam and railways enough has been said. Everybody knows more than could be told here of what they do in superseding toil, in setting human hands free for skilled labour, in

bringing men face to face with each other, and with nature and novelty; the peer face to face with the farmer and the merchant, and the mechanic face to face with mountain and forest and sea.—Then, again, we have new explosive substances which first connect themselves in our thoughts with war—as the gun-cotton of recent invention, but which will doubtless be used to lay open secrets of nature, and help us in our application of the arts when the nations shall not learn war any more. In an humbler way, but by no means a contemptible one, we have now means of obtaining fire in a moment, everywhere. Not only in the cottage but in every house the tiresome tinder-box, with its slowness and uncertainty, was the only way to get fire twenty years ago, except in the chemist's laboratory, where phosphorus matches were a sort of terror to the commonalty. Now the penny box of lucifers is in every cottage, where it saves the burning of the rushlight for the baby's sake. We have had some rick and shed burning in consequence; but that evil was sure to follow any great facility in obtaining fire.—In waterproof clothing, the poor have obtained a great benefit. Large classes of labourers may soon be better protected from wet at their outdoor work than are the policemen of the present day.—The Thames Tunnel may at first appear purely a work of human head and hands—a piece of boring and building; but it could not have been achieved in an age of science inferior to our own. Mention has been made before of the strong and wide interest which existed about this work when it was brought to a stop, and shut up for some years. The sanguine were justified in their prophecies that it would be opened again. In December 1841, the works reached the shaft at Wapping; and on the 24th, an opening was made in the brick-work of the shaft; and a large party of gentlemen—all the directors and several original subscribers—walked through, being the first persons who had ever passed under the river from shore to shore. In March 1843, it was opened to foot-passengers, a grand procession with music passing through one side and returning by the other. While this modern mermaid music was going on lower than the fishes could dive, there was some grief and mourning above—such as always makes the drawback on

new appliances of civilisation. A black flag was hung out at the tunnel pier, to show the displeasure of the watermen at such a supersession of their Redriffe ferry. In the next July, the queen and Prince Albert went to see the tunnel; and in the following March, at the end of the first year, upwards of 2,000,000 of foot-passengers had paid toll. To this day, it is the first object of curiosity to foreigners visiting London.

It must be in another kind of history than this that the progress of science during the last thirty years should be recorded. Here, we can only point out the great apparatus provided for that end in the British Association for the Advancement of Science. This association has continued to hold its meetings from year to year; and, admitting all that has been said, and all that can be said, of its drawbacks—of the waste of time by the talking of egotists, and the levity and vanity of many who congregate there for excitement or display—there remains a large amount of practical service to human interests. There are men watching the tides on the shores of all seas; and we are likely to know in time the levels of all the waters of the globe. Observatories—Russian, French, American, British, and others—are set up in every zone. One man comes with proof in his hand of the existence of an unseen heavenly body, which others begin to look for; and something, whether it or another, is found. Others come from searching in the opposite direction, and bring up almost incredible knowledge from the bowels of the earth. The most obvious result, perhaps, to common eyes, of these scientific gatherings, is the wide spread of geological knowledge; or, at least, of ideas related to such knowledge. It is a good thing that men should have some notion of the structure of the globe; it is better that their minds should open to the conception of vast spaces of time, and of huge revolutions of nature, and of that order of appearance of all living things which is so unlike previous conception; but it must surely be a nobler thing still that men should learn the relation they bear to their place of abode—should get to know how the human mind and life take their character from the geological formation of the region they dwell in. If they perceive how the dwellers in the desert must

necessarily be one sort of men, and the dwellers in pasture-lands another—how thoughts and desires and ways, and therefore physical structure itself, are modified by men living in a mineral, or a pastoral, or an agricultural district—they have obtained a grasp of some of the grandest conditions of human life, from which must arise, in time, some determining power over the human lot. It is not to be wondered at, considering how the science of geology interests at once the reasoning and the observing faculties, the imagination—both antiquarian and speculative—and the humanity which dwells more or less in every one, that its spread among the people should be one of the most noticeable facts of our time.

Then, there is some advance made towards a real science of medicine. It cannot be said that we have yet any science of medicine, properly so called; and the ablest physicians are the most ready and anxious to make the declaration. But there are, or seem to be, now clear openings to a knowledge of the nature of disease, and not only to that of symptoms of disease. As a philosopher of our day is wont to say, we are now presented, as it were, with the fragmentary parts of some great general law of the human frame, which we seem to be on the verge of discovering. Since the peace, the physicians of Europe have communicated more freely than before; though still, the spirit of the profession hinders their communicating enough, or in the best manner. The hitherto universal empirical method of producing, by drugs and otherwise, one set of symptoms of disease to drive out another, has already given way, in many directions, to the trial of more natural methods, based on new observations. Dr. Hahnemann's opposite method, based on a theory yet dim and imperfect, but more philosophical on the face of it, prevails widely in schools of medicine abroad, and in private practice in England, so as to have remarkably diminished the application of drugs, and the creation of artificial ailments. The water-system, with all its abuse and extravagance, has been useful in putting a check upon the worse empiricism which preceded it; and we have considerably advanced in our insight into some prodigious mysteries of the human frame, which rebuke alike the levity of ignorance and the

solemnity of professional dogmatism. Our knowledge is as yet little enough, but it is more than it was; and one consequence of the research, and of improved intercourse with the continent—a consequence open to universal observation—is that physicians give fewer and fewer drugs, and admit more and more freely that a scientific basis for their profession remains to be found.—As might be expected, the knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and the art of surgery, have advanced at a far more rapid rate; and in this way the chances of alleviation of human suffering are improving every day.

And here we slide into the department of social interests. The attention given to sanitary improvements is a leading feature of our time. Thirty years ago, scarcely anybody thought of pure air, good drainage, a sufficient supply of water, or even cleanliness of person, as we all think of them now. In the greatest houses, there was little or no thought about what kind of soil the house was built on, or where the drains emptied themselves, or where the used-up air of the apartments went to, or, perhaps, of the necessity of thorough daily ablution; yet now these things are coming into consideration on behalf of the very poorest. There was, thirty years ago, more spirit-and-water drinking among the middle-classes, more tight-lacing among women, more physicking of children, more close rooms, a more imperfect washing of clothes, less exercise and cold water in general use, less horror at close alleys, and large cities without airing-grounds. Now we have people's parks, here and there; we have baths and washhouses for the poor—and not as charity, but as a purchasable convenience for those who live in small houses or few rooms. We have not yet achieved the wholesome and profitable drainage of towns, and ventilation of the houses therein, and the abolition of burial of the dead among the homes of the living; but we have a firm hold of the idea and the purpose, and the great work is therefore sure to be done. Among many benefactors in this direction, we must mention first Dr. Andrew Combe, the kindly Edinburgh physician, who turned his own loss of health to the purpose of improving the health of others. He made himself a subject of cool

philosophical observation, and gave us the benefit, in some popular works on physiological subjects, which have diffused a useful knowledge of the conditions of health, and a wholesome observance of them, wherever they have spread—that is, almost all over Great Britain and the United States, and probably much further. In these works, whose views are to a great degree the reflection of the sufferings of the author, there is no trace of egotism, or of anything else that is morbid. Dr. Combe unconsciously gives us in them a moral instruction not less valuable than the sanitary.—Mr. Chadwick has no doubt done more than any one other man in direct furtherance of the general health. He has looked at the subject on every side, and exhibited it in every light. He has insisted, not only on the cruelty of condemning a multitude of our citizens to disease and premature death, but on the sin of encouraging crime by discomfort, and the folly of expending more money on the burial of the dead, and the support of the widows and orphans that they leave, than would keep the community in health. Mr. Chadwick's connection with the first commission of the new poor-law afforded him opportunity for obtaining an extraordinary amount of information on sanitary subjects; and he has so strenuously worked the enterprise of reform, that its completion is, amidst many discouragements and difficulties, natural in such a case, merely a question of time. Before the history of another period shall be written by some one of the next generation, we may hope that the Thames will have ceased to receive the filth of London and of other towns; that the sewers will answer their proper purpose; that every house will be supplied with pure water; that the dead will be buried in country cemeteries; that every stagnant ditch and dunghill will be treated as a public offence; and that the causes of fever will be destroyed wherever it is possible to detect them.

The pursuit of this inquiry has cut out work for the agricultural associations of the kingdom. It is now known that the proper application of the filth that destroys life by fever, would support, in the form of wholesome food, a vastly increased amount of human life. The

science of agricultural chemistry has advanced materially within thirty years—partly in consequence of our improved intercourse with the continent. And our agricultural associations have sprung up within a much shorter date. The Board of Agriculture, the pet project of George III., was supported by an annual parliamentary grant. It had no real life in it, and it expired when the parliamentary grant was withdrawn in 1817. After that, we had in England nothing corresponding to the great and useful Highland Society of Scotland. Scotch farming improved continually. In England, farming could hardly grow worse than it had been, but it did not improve. Mr. William Shaw understood something of the magnitude of the need. In 1834, and subsequent years, he urged continually, in agricultural periodicals, the formation of a national society for the advancement of practical agriculture. At the dinner of the Smithfield Club, on the 11th of December 1837, Lord Spencer proposed the formation of such a society; and the thing was done. From the knowledge since obtained, and the results already exhibited, it appears that if we understood our position and our business, there need be no more fear of an insufficiency of work or of food for the people. If all refuse were used as manure, and all the land now under cultivation were properly tilled, we should hear no more in our time of surplus population, of wages falling below 8*s*., of farmers having cause to dread the importation of foreign wheat, or of the consumption of meat being confined to classes who by no means want it most. As the development of manufactures was the grand economical feature of the last century, that of agriculture appears likely to become the distinctive feature of the present. The pernicious spell of protection is dissolved; something like a scientific education is now to be obtained by the next generation of farmers; and our sanitary researches are about to provide an ample supply of the first requisite of increased production. We may hope soon to see the agricultural population once more gaining upon the manufacturing, and the rural labouring-classes ceasing to be the opprobrium of our polity.—We have shown that the preservation of game is giving way, and must give way still

further.—We are in course of improvement with regard to our prison management. There is nothing to boast about yet, when we look at our convicts as victims of moral disease induced by ignorance and social neglect; but there is no comparison between the state of our prisons now and thirty years since. Since that time Mrs. Fry and her coadjutors have done their benevolent work; and it has been followed up by government and local authorities to such a point as to leave no doubt of a thorough reform in time. The main existing difficulty arises from the want of an ascertained basis of action. We have not settled yet what to do with our convicts. There is a clear expectation everywhere that the punishment of death will soon be abolished. There is, at the same time, almost universal discontent with our transportation system, and the widest diversity of views as to how convicts are to be managed and disposed of. It is not for us to prophesy what the result will be. It is enough to record that the question is before the national mind. It is enough that justice and mercy are invoked; for there never yet was any difficulty which, once appealed to, they refused to solve.

We have seen how essentially our criminal law has been improved since the days when Romilly laboured on amidst discouragement of every kind. We have seen how our nation has been relieved from the disgrace of slave-holding. We have failed in our efforts to stop the slave-trade; and we appear slow to learn that the slave-trade can come to an end only by being superseded, and not by being checked by force of arms. By encouraging the production of cotton, sugar, and coffee by free labour, by fostering innocent commerce in Africa, and, not least, by sympathising with the peaceful efforts of abolitionists wherever they are striving against the curse of slavery, we can do more for the extinction of the hellish traffic than by any armed force that can be sent out upon the sea. As the nation first in economic rank among the peoples of the world, it seems as if it must be our business to put down slavery by exhibiting its inferiority to free labour, while not the less insisting on its moral odiousness.

We have witnessed the rise and progress of mechanics' institutes. We have seen a small beginning made of a state education of children. A very small beginning it is—the whole sum of parliamentary grants not yet reaching half a million. There has been a great amount of virtuous voluntary effort, among Churchmen, Dissenters, Chartists, employers of labour, and a multitude who were ready to aid; but there are bounds to the ability of individuals; and it cannot, in the nature of things, go on expanding in proportion to the ever-growing need. Again, the quality of the education given by private efforts is a very uncertain matter. It can rarely be so good as that which is planned from the united wisdom of a people, and it is apt to be of a very low order. The sectarian spirit which is the curse of English society has thus far condemned the children of the nation to a defective education, or to total ignorance. While in no department of benevolent action has there been more energy and goodwill than in extending education, in none are we more behind the needs of the time. We shall not be safe, morally, politically, or economically, till we join in agreeing that, as each church cannot have its own way, nor any one, even though it be the Established Church, we must meet the evil of ignorance in the largest class of the people, by throwing open to all means of sound moral and intellectual education, leaving the religious instruction and training to the pastors or guardians of the pupils. In indirect ways, meanwhile, the education of the people has been going on. We have seen that much was done for the intellects of large numbers by the action of the Anti-Corn-Law League. Much, again, has been done by the vast spread of cheap literature, inducing, among other benefits, the formation of penny-a-week book-clubs. And then there is that animating feature of the time, the introduction of music as a popular pursuit. For this, we are obviously indebted to the peace. It is from Germany that this remarkable benefit has come. In 1842, we find the first performance of Mr. Hullah's musical classes to have taken place, in the presence of Prince Albert, in Exeter Hall. The classes were formed under the sanction of the government council of education. Here, on

the very first public trial, 1500 novices sang, without the guidance of any instrument, psalms, hymns, and a madrigal, in a manner which made some hearers look upon Mr. Hullah as a sort of magician, who could convert a crowd of untuned English adults, hitherto almost unconscious what music was, into a vast organ endowed with soul. Since that date, music has been a beloved and joyful pursuit in many a little back-parlour in Whitechapel and the suburbs of London, in many a workshop in provincial towns, and at evening-gatherings in remote villages where some pupil of Hullah or Mainzer may have settled. There is now glee-singing to be heard among apprentices in north-country villages which could hardly have been surpassed, a quarter of a century ago, in our cathedral towns.—In another branch of art, how has the popular taste been improved by the immigration of foreigners! Before 1815, our artisan classes saw an exhibition of wax-work occasionally, and could buy for their mantel-shelf blue and green plaster parrots, and brown and white plaster cats. Now, we find in cottages the Princess Marie's Joan of Arc, and Canova's groups, or our own Shakspeare and Milton—cheap and somewhat coarse, but better than parrots and cats. It is surprising now to go into remote corners of the country, where Italian boys have not penetrated, and see there what ornaments our people admired before the peace. This is a benefit not confined to large towns. In large towns we find something more. We find museums and galleries of art, and exhibitions of manufactures opened to the multitude. The British Museum admits, on Easter Monday, more than the total population of a provincial city; and there are hundreds of artisans in London who can now tell their brother-workmen about the gods and heroes of Egyptian temples and tombs, and the monuments of Assyrian monarchs mentioned in the Bible.

Amidst these processes of virtual education, we find the function of the educator somewhat more respected than it used to be. There are still suburban villages where the inhabitants are too genteel to admit persons engaged in education to their book-clubs; but this is laughed at by the wiser majority of the middle-class. Some of the

efforts to exalt the position of the educator have been fantastic enough, and unsuccessful accordingly; for it is a thing which cannot be arbitrarily done. When education is duly improved, the educator will be duly honoured, and not till then; and for the sound reason that not till then will the educator be worthy of his pretensions. Meantime, the tutor and the governess are more humanely considered than they used to be, in regard to their sufferings and their needs, and more sure of appreciation when they merit it. The main evil still is in the middle-class poverty which makes tutors and governesses of many hundreds who would fain obtain their bread in some other way, and who are thus not in a position to require more than a mere rescue from present poverty. Associations for the relief and care of governesses are benevolent in aim, and afford subsistence and solace to the worn-out and helpless to a certain extent; but it is obvious that this is not an agency which can elevate a class, or modify an institution. If governesses are to rise to honour and independence, it must be by their being educated to sustain an honourable and indispensable function. They must have professional requisites to obtain professional dues. Hitherto, their position has been partly one of service, partly a professional one, without express training for either.

There can be no question of our methods of charity having improved since the publication of the reports on which the reform of the poor-law was founded. There was always plenty of alms-giving; proneness enough to relieve the misery which met the eye. Now, there is more searching into the causes of misery, and a more widely spread knowledge that social misery cannot be cured, but is usually aggravated, by alms-giving.—The remaining grand feature of a renewed social temper is the spread of a spirit of peace—of a disinclination, that is, for brute violence. The diminution of the practice of duelling is remarkable. In 1843, after the public had been shocked by the occurrence of a fatal duel which in former times would have merely furnished forth the gossip of the day, an association was formed which would not in old times have been dreamed of—an Anti-duelling Association, consisting of 326 mem-

bers, so many of whom were of the two services, or noblemen, baronets, and members of parliament, that they fairly conceived themselves strong enough in their union to lead public opinion in the matter of personal honour. Their first act was to denounce duelling, as contrary to the laws of God and man, and eminently irrational as well as sinful, and to pledge themselves to discountenance by influence and example the practice which they condemned. In the next year, some amended articles relating to duelling were issued from the war-office, by order of the queen; and in these articles duelling was prohibited, on the representation that honourable men are ready to apologise for offence given in mistake or haste, and that a reference to friends, or, if that will not do, to the commanding officer on the spot, ought to suffice for all purposes of personal justification. There were exhortations and provisions in regard to the seconds, and an assertion of true principles of honour in words of the Duke of Wellington's of old date. It was not to be supposed that a practice so grounded in self-regards as that of duelling could be put an end to by an ordinance like this; but it was a useful declaration at a particular juncture; and there can be no doubt of the great abatement of the barbarous practice during the last years of this period.

Finally, if we review for a moment the political morality of the period, we shall see, not only an improvement, but an essential change. The old Toryism is gone. We never hear of it now, even from the most antique members of the House of Peers. Our present Conservatism may admit under its term much that is selfish, corrupt, and requiring strenuous opposition; but its idea is indispensable under a representative system, and its requisitions are not at present offensive; or, it may be, they are not strongly enough urged to be injurious to the public welfare. The doctrines of Bentham, so much discussed in the early part of the century, and now so seldom heard of, were operative to the extent in which they were wanted. In as far as they were shallow, pedantic, and inadequate to the mind of man, and the needs of a state, they are forgotten—in as far as they are rational, and benevolent, and genial, they still work. 'The greatest happiness of the greatest

number' is not now talked of as the profession of a school; but the idea is in the mind of politicians, and shapes their aims. The truest welfare of the largest classes has been the plea for much of our legislation, and especially for the whole grand achievement of the completion of free-trade. No statesman would now dream of conducting the government on any other avowed principle than consulting the welfare of the greatest number in preference to that of any smaller class.—Another remarkable advance, which needs only to be indicated, is that in the direction of religious liberty. The emancipation of the Catholics might still be regarded as an act of mere pressing necessity; but the preponderance of opinion in favour of religious liberty—a preponderance in every political party, and in a case where there was nothing but the principle at stake—on the occasion, that is, of the Dissenters' Chapels Bill—showed a prodigious advance since the time when the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts was refused, with levity, or with silly solemnity, from session to session. The spirit of religious liberty may now be considered to dwell in every man among us worthy to be called a statesman.

While all this is done—so much progress achieved that appears to be incontrovertible—what remains to be done? Something greater than all that has been achieved. The tremendous labour question remains absolutely untouched—the question whether the toil of a life is not to provide a sufficiency of bread. No thoughtful man can for a moment suppose that this question can be put aside. No man with a head and a heart can suppose that any considerable class of a nation will submit for ever to toil incessantly for bare necessaries—without comfort, ease, or luxury, now—without prospect for their children, and without a hope for their own old age. A social idea or system which compels such a state of things as this, must be, in so far, worn out. In ours, it is clear that some renovation is wanted, and must be found. We see celibacy so extending in our middle class as that hardly half of them marry before they are elderly, while the poor and pauper class marry as before, and thus provide for a vast preponderance of the democratic element in our society in the course of

another generation. And this is a serious matter for the statesman to ponder. It arises from a diminution of means in the middle class, and the recklessness of poverty in the very lowest. Such is its origin; but what will be its issue? While the statesman is pondering this, the moralist will mourn over the vice which is the inevitable consequence of the restriction of marriage in the middle class. And what can the moralist say to the extraordinary increase of the crime of domestic poisoning among our poor? That a mother should, unconscious of wrong, have poisoned eight infants in succession by putting arsenic on her breasts, is a fact which, strengthened by the occurrence of similar deeds about the same time, makes us fancy we are dreaming about living in an age of improved civilisation and humanity. If it be true, as some of us say, that the labourer's life-long toil demands a return, not only of sufficient food, and a domestic shelter for his old age, but of intellectual and spiritual culture, what can we say to the intellectual and spiritual state of the lower portion of our working-classes? How much is there of the intellectual pride of ignorance and misinformation, and of that worst infidelity which grows out of a sense of injustice! If we hear complaints of the irreligion of the poor, and of the growth of that irreligion, we ought to put ourselves in their place, and observe how the religion of the rich must appear to them there; and then we shall understand how suspicious they must be of promises of unseen and future good, when it is offered as better than the substantial good which they see others enjoying, and feel to be their due. When a man sees his children sinking in body for want of food, and in mind for want of instruction, can he be content with the prospect held out by the well-fed and learned of a happiness which he cannot now understand, and is not sure that he could ever enjoy? Men so placed are like children. They must have justice before they can humbly and magnanimously forego justice. Before they can enter into a state of religious contentment, they must see why they should be content; and they ought to decline being content before they see reason for it. Thus it is that, in spite of church-building, and missionary effort, and extensive charity, there is so much proud and hard irreligion among

the poor of our nation. If it be said that they are improvident, and that a multitude who are in poverty need not be so, the answer again is plain. They know no better; and that they know no better is caused by social neglect. They are not comfortable; they feel that while they work, they ought to be comfortable; and they will not acquiesce while they see that those who work less are more comfortable, and they are not told why. This is what remains for us to do—to find out the why, and to make everybody understand it.

The material for working out a better state is before us; and the question of the rights of labour is pressing upon us. We have science brightening around us, which may teach us to increase indefinitely our supply of food. We have labourers everywhere who are as capable as any men above them of domestic solicitude, and who will not be more reckless about a provision for their families than gentlemen are, when once the natural affections of the citizen-parent are allowed free scope. We have now, by the recent repeal of the remnant of the navigation-laws, complete liberty of commerce. We have now the best heads and hearts occupied about this great question of the rights of labour, with impressive warnings, presented to us from abroad, that it cannot be neglected under a lighter penalty than ruin to all. Is it possible that the solution should not be found? This solution may probably be the central fact of the next period of British history; and then, better than now, it may be seen that in preparation for it lies the chief interest of the preceding Thirty Years' Peace.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

APPENDIX.

Cabinet Ministers.*	1814.	1815.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Nicholas Vansittart	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Earl Mulgrave	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Viscount Sidmouth	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Castlereagh	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	Earl Buckinghamshire	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	C. Bragge Bathurst	
Master of the Mint	W. W. Pole	

Cabinet Ministers.	1816.	1817.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Nicholas Vansittart	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Earl Mulgrave	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Viscount Sidmouth	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Castlereagh	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	George Canning	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	C. Bragge Bathurst	
Master of the Mint	W. W. Pole	

Cabinet Ministers.	1818.	1819.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Nicholas Vansittart	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Earl Mulgrave	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Viscount Sidmouth	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Castlereagh	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	George Canning	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	C. Bragge Bathurst	
Master of the Mint	W. W. Pole	
Treasurer of Navy, and President of Board of Trade	Fred. John Robinson.	

* The Lists generally show the composition of the Cabinet at the opening of the Parliamentary Session, but not always, especially in the cases of individual changes, Where the columns are blank, it is to be understood that there have been no changes.

Cabinet Ministers.	1820—April.	1821.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Nicholas Vansittart	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Duke of Wellington	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Viscount Sidmouth	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Castlereagh.	Marq. of Londonderry.*
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	George Canning	C. Bragge Bathurst.
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	C. Bragge Bathurst	
Master of the Mint	W. W. Pole	Lord Maryborough.
Treasurer of Navy, and President of Board of Trade	Fred. John Robinson. Earl of Mulgrave (*without office*).	

Cabinet Ministers.	1822.	1823.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Earl of Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Nicholas Vansittart	Fred. J. Robinson.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Duke of Wellington	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Robert Peel	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Marquis Londonderry	George Canning.
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	C. W. W. Wynne.	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	C. Bathurst	Lord Bexley.
Master of the Mint	Lord Maryborough	
Treasurer of Navy, and President of Board of Trade	Fred. J. Robinson. Viscount Sidmouth	

Cabinet Ministers.	1824.	1825.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Earl of Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Fred. J. Robinson	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Duke of Wellington	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Robert Peel	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	George Canning	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	C. W. W. Wynne	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Bexley	
Master of the Mint	Lord Maryborough	
Treasurer of Navy, and President of Board of Trade	Fred. J. Robinson. Viscount Sidmouth	W. Huskisson.

* This is merely a change of title, consequent on the death of Lord Castlereagh's father.

Cabinet Ministers.	1826.	1827—January.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl of Liverpool.	
Lord President of the Council.	Earl of Harrowby	
Lord High Chancellor	Earl of Eldon	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Westmoreland	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Fred. J. Robinson	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Duke of Wellington	
Secretary of State—Home Department	Robert Peel	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	George Canning	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl Bathurst	
President of Board of Control	C. W. W. Wynne	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Bexley	
Master of the Mint		
Treasurer of the Navy	W. Huskisson	
President of Board of Trade	W. Huskisson	
First Commissioner of Land Revenue	Viscount Sidmouth	

Cabinet Ministers.	1827—May.	1827—October.
First Lord of the Treasury	G. Canning	Lord Goderich.
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Harrowby	Duke of Portland.
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst	
Lord Privy Seal	Duke of Portland	Earl of Carlisle.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	G. Canning	J. Herries.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Duke of Wellington	Marquis of Anglesea.
Secretary of State—Home Department	W. S. Bourne	Marq. of Lansdowne.
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Dudley	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Viscount Goderich	W. Huskisson.
President of Board of Control	C. W. W. Wynne	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Bexley	
Master of the Mint		G. Tierney.
Treasurer of the Navy	W. Huskisson	C. Grant.
President of Board of Trade	W. Huskisson	C. Grant.
First Commissioner of Land Revenue	Viscount Sidmouth	
Secretary at War	Viscount Palmerston.	
Surveyor of Woods and Forests		W. S. Bourne.

Cabinet Ministers.	1828.	1829.
First Lord of the Treasury	Viscount Goderich	Duke of Wellington.
Lord President of the Council.	Duke of Portland	Earl Bathurst.
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Carlisle	Earl of Rosslyn.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	J. C. Herries	H. Goulburn.
First Lord of the Admiralty		Viscount Melville.
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Marq. of Lansdowne	R. Peel.
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Earl Dudley	Earl of Aberdeen.
,, ,, War and Colonies	W. Huskisson	Sir G. Murray.
President of Board of Control		Lord Ellenborough.
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster		
Master of the Mint	G. Tierney	J. C. Herries.
Treasurer of Navy	C. Grant	W. Fitzgerald.
President of Board of Trade		
First Commissioner of Land Revenue	W. S. Bourne	
Secretary at War	Viscount Palmerston	

Cabinet Ministers.	1830.	1831.
First Lord of the Treasury	Duke of Wellington	Earl Grey.
Lord President of the Council	Earl Bathurst	Marq. of Lansdowne.
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst	Lord Brougham.
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Rosslyn	Lord Durham.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	H. Goulburn	Viscount Althorp.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Viscount Melville	Sir J. Graham.
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	R. Peel	Viscount Melbourne.
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Earl of Aberdeen	Viscount Palmerston.
,, ,, War and Colonies	Sir G. Murray	Viscount Goderich.
President of Board of Control	Lord Ellenborough	C. Grant.
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster		Lord Holland.
Master of the Mint	J. C. Herries	Lord Auckland.
Treasurer of Navy	W. Fitzgerald	
President of Board of Trade		
First Commissioner of Land Revenue	W. S. Bourne	
Secretary at War	Viscount Palmerston	
Postmaster-general		Duke of Richmond.
Paymaster of the Forces		Lord John Russell.
Chief Secretary for Ireland		E. G. S. Stanley. / Earl of Carlisle.

Cabinet Ministers.	1832.	1833.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl Grey	
Lord President of the Council	Marq. of Lansdowne	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Brougham	
Lord Privy Seal	Lord Durham	Earl of Ripon.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Viscount Althorp	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Sir J. Graham.	
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Viscount Melbourne	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Palmerston	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Viscount Goderich	E. G. S. Stanley.
President of Board of Control	C. Grant	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Holland	
Master of the Mint	Lord Auckland	
Treasurer of the Navy, and President of the Board of Trade		
Postmaster-general	Duke of Richmond	
Paymaster of the Forces	Lord J. Russell	
Chief Secretary for Ireland	E. G. S. Stanley / Earl of Carlisle	

Cabinet Ministers.	1834—January.	1834—August.
First Lord of the Treasury	Earl Grey	Viscount Melbourne.
Lord President of the Council	Marq. of Lansdowne	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Brougham	
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Ripon	Earl of Mulgrave.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Viscount Althorp.	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Sir J. Graham.	Lord Auckland.
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Viscount Melbourne	Viscount Duncannon.
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Palmerston.	

CABINET MINISTERS—(*cont.*)	1834—January.	1834—August.
Secretary of State—War and Colonies	E. G. S. Stanley	S. Rice.
President of Board of Control	C. Grant	
Chancellor of Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Holland	
Master of the Mint	Lord Auckland	
Treasurer of the Navy, and President of the Board of Trade		
Postmaster-general	Duke of Richmond	Marq. of Conyngham.
Paymaster of the Forces	Lord J. Russell	
Chief Secretary for Ireland	E. G. S. Stanley Earl of Carlisle	E. J. Littleton.

CABINET MINISTERS.	1834—December.	1835—January.
First Lord of the Treasury	Sir R. Peel.	
Lord President of the Council	Earl of Rosslyn	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst	
Lord Privy Seal	Lord Wharncliffe	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Sir R. Peel.	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl de Grey	
Master-general of the Ordnance	Sir G. Murray.	
Secretary of State—Home Department	H. Goulburn	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Duke of Wellington	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Earl of Aberdeen	
President of Board of Control	Lord Ellenborough	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster		
Master of the Mint	A. Baring	
Treasurer of the Navy, and President of the Board of Trade		
Postmaster-general		
Paymaster of the Forces	Sir E. Knatchbull	
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Sir H. Hardinge	
Secretary at War	J. C. Herries	

CABINET MINISTERS.	1835—April.	1836.
First Lord of the Treasury	Viscount Melbourne	
Lord President of the Council	Marq. of Lansdowne	
Lord High Chancellor	In Commission	Lord Cottenham.
Lord Privy Seal	Viscount Duncannon.	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	T. S. Rice	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Minto	
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Lord J. Russell	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Palmerston.	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord Glenelg	
President of Board of Control	Sir J. C. Hobhouse	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Holland	
Master of the Mint		
Treasurer of the Navy, and President of the Board of Trade	C. P. Thomson	
Postmaster-general		
Paymaster of the Forces		
Chief Secretary for Ireland.		
Secretary at War	Viscount Howick	

Cabinet Ministers.	1837.	1838.
First Lord of the Treasury	Viscount Melbourne.	
Lord President of the Council	Marq. of Lansdowne.	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Cottenham	
Lord Privy Seal	Viscount Duncannon.	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	T. S. Rice	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Minto	
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Lord J. Russell	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Palmerston.	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord Glenelg	
President of Board of Control	Sir J. C. Hobhouse	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Holland	
Master of the Mint		
Treasurer of the Navy		
President of the Board of Trade	C. P. Thomson	
Postmaster-general		
Paymaster of the Forces		
Chief Secretary for Ireland		
Secretary at War	Viscount Howick	

Cabinet Ministers.	1839.	1840.
First Lord of the Treasury	Viscount Melbourne.	
Lord President of the Council	Marq. of Lansdowne.	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Cottenham	
Lord Privy Seal	Viscount Duncannon	Earl of Clarendon.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	F. T. Baring	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Minto	
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Marquis of Normanby	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Palmerston	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord J. Russell	
President of Board of Control	Sir J. C. Hobhouse	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Lord Holland	
Master of the Mint	H. Labouchere	
Treasurer of the Navy		
President of the Board of Trade	H. Labouchere	
Postmaster-general		
Paymaster of the Forces		
Chief Secretary for Ireland	Lord Mexpeth	
Secretary at War	T. B. Macaulay	

Cabinet Ministers.	1841—January.	1841—September.
First Lord of the Treasury	Viscount Melbourne.	Sir R. Peel.
Lord President of the Council	Marq. of Lansdowne.	Lord Wharncliffe.
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Cottenham	Lord Lyndhurst.
Lord Privy Seal	Earl of Clarendon	Duke of Buckingham.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	F. T. Baring	H. Goulburn.
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Minto	Earl of Haddington.
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Marquis of Normanby	Sir J. Graham.
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Viscount Palmerston.	Earl of Aberdeen.
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord J. Russell	Lord Stanley.

Cabinet Ministers—(*cont.*)	1841—January.	1841—September.
President of the Board of Control.	Sir J. C. Hobhouse	Lord Ellenborough.
Master of the Mint	H. Labouchere	
President of the Board of Trade		Earl of Ripon.
Secretary at War	T. B. Macaulay	Sir H. Hardinge.
Paymaster-general		Sir E. Knatchbull.
Chief Secretary for Ireland.	Lord Morpeth	Lord Eliot.
Commander of the Forces		
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Sir G. Grey	
First Commissioner of Land Revenue	Viscount Duncannon	
		Duke of Wellington (*without office*).

Cabinet Ministers.	1842.	1843.
First Lord of the Treasury	Sir R. Peel.	
Lord President of the Council.	Lord Wharncliffe.	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst	
Lord Privy Seal	Duke of Buccleuch	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	H. Goulburn	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Haddington	
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Sir J. Graham.	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Earl of Aberdeen.	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord Stanley	
President of the Board of Control.	Lord Fitzgerald	
Master of the Mint		
President of the Board of Trade	Earl of Ripon.	
Secretary at War	Sir H. Hardinge	
Paymaster-general	Sir E. Knatchbull.	
Chief Secretary for Ireland.	Lord Eliot	
Commander of the Forces		Duke of Wellington.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster		
First Commissioner of Land Revenue		

Cabinet Ministers.	1844.	1845.
First Lord of the Treasury	Sir R. Peel.	
Lord President of the Council	Lord Wharncliffe.	
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst	
Lord Privy Seal	Duke of Buccleuch	
Chancellor of the Exchequer	H. Goulburn	
First Lord of the Admiralty	Earl of Haddington	
Master-general of the Ordnance		
Secretary of State—Home Department	Sir J. Graham.	
,, ,, Foreign Affairs	Earl of Aberdeen.	
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord Stanley	
President of the Board of Control.	Lord Ripon	
President of the Board of Trade	W. E. Gladstone	
Secretary at War	Sir H. Hardinge	Sidney Herbert.
Chief Secretary for Ireland.	Lord Eliot	
Paymaster of the Forces	Sir E. Knatchbull	
Commander-in-Chief	Duke of Wellington	
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster		Lord G. C. H. Somerset.
First Commissioner of Land Revenue		Earl of Lincoln.
Woods and Forests		
Postmaster-general		

Cabinet Ministers.	1846—Jan. to June.
First Lord of the Treasury . . .	Sir R. Peel.
Lord President of the Council. . .	Lord Wharncliffe.
Lord High Chancellor	Lord Lyndhurst.
Lord Privy Seal	Duke of Buccleuch.
Chancellor of the Exchequer . . .	H. Goulburn.
First Lord of the Admiralty . . .	Earl of Haddington.
Master-general of the Ordnance . .	. . .
Secretary of State—Home Department	Sir J. Graham.
,, ,, Foreign Affairs .	Earl of Aberdeen.
,, ,, War and Colonies	Lord Stanley.
President of the Board of Control. .	Lord Ripon.
President of the Board of Trade . .	W. E. Gladstone.
Secretary at War	Sidney Herbert.
Chief Secretary for Ireland . . .	Lord Eliot.
Paymaster of the Forces	Sir E. Knatchbull.
Commander-in-Chief	Duke of Wellington.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Lord G. C. H. Somerset.
First Commissioner of Land Revenue	Earl of Lincoln.
Woods and Forests	. .
Postmaster-general	. .

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